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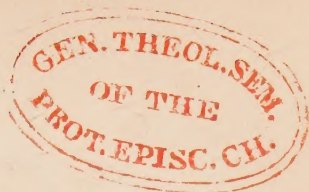
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THE



TREATISE OF

JOHN CHRYSOSTOM,

PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE,

ON THE PRIESTHOOD.

TRANSLATED BY

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PREFACE.

THE qualifications for the christian priesthood are a subject of infinite importance: for as a faithful, godly, and well instructed ministry is a blessing, so a negligent, vicious, and ill taught ministry, is a curse to any christian community.

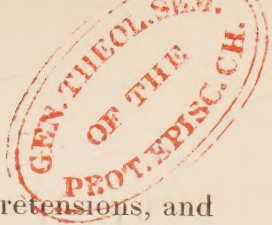
Accordingly, various treatises on this subject have been published in all ages, the most celebrated of which is that, a translation of which is now submitted to the English reader. It is the oldest production extant on this great argument, and exhibits in detail the sentiments of one of the chief ornaments of the early church. Chrysostom was born

in the year of our Lord, 354. He was made archbishop of Constantinople in 398, and died in 407.

The work has been continually quoted, and appealed to by all subsequent writers on the qualifications of the ministers of the gospel. Particularly the author of the most noted treatise in our own church on the pastoral care, bishop Burnet, has the following passage in regard to it. After a quotation of some length from the second, third, fourth, and fifth books of the treatise he says—‘ I hope I have drawn out enough to give a curiosity to such as have not yet read those excellent books, to do it over and over again: for to any, that has a true relish, they can never be too often read. Every reading will afford a fresh pleasure, and new matter of instruction and meditation.’

It seems therefore desirable, that the English reader should be put in possession of a work, so recommended.

There is moreover an additional reason for bringing forward this particular work in the present day, because the opinions of the



early church on the claims, pretensions, and character of the christian priesthood have of late become in an unusual degree a subject of discussion ; and it is therefore greatly to be desired, that the actual facts of the case should be brought as clearly as possible within reach of the christian public.

I have, however, judged it advisable to accompany this publication with a few notes, in the hope of assisting the reader to estimate the value, and test the correctness of the sentiments, contained in it, by a reference to the only standard of christian truth, the Bible.

We may thus gain some insight into the state of the early church : for the work before us may be regarded, as a portrait of the prevailing turn of thought and sentiment among the leading christians of the age, when it was written.

I will not enter into that inquiry prematurely, but will only make one observation on the title, which is prefixed to it. Chrysostom has adopted the levitical title, priesthood, *ιερωσύνη*, in preference to the evangelical

word, presbytership, from which the English word, priest, is a contraction. The words in the original are perfectly distinct, and cannot be mistaken, or confounded. This preference accordingly is an indication of a prevailing disposition in that age unduly to magnify the ministerial office by borrowing the terms, and investing it with all the peculiarities, of the levitical priesthood.

At the same time these indications are not to be judged by the consequences, which in other ages have resulted from them. If St. Paul magnified his office, it was surely allowable for other ministers to magnify it too, provided they did not exceed the limits of christian sobriety. How far this apology is applicable to the eminent writer of this treatise, will appear in the sequel. But the mere adaptation of ancient mysteries to a more recent dispensation may be in itself innocent, having indeed the hallowed precedent of the prophetic style in its favour, while yet its liability to perversion, and still more its actual perversion by a large section of the

christian church should make us cautious in the use of it.

There are other sentiments contained in the volume, which will surprise a modern reader, and which will be noticed separately hereafter. But the main subject of inquiry, the spirit, in which the holy office of the ministry ought to be undertaken, and the manner, in which it ought to be discharged, constitutes the value of the work, and will amply reward a diligent perusal.

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ON THE PRIESTHOOD.

BOOK THE FIRST.

I HAD many good and valued friends, who knew, and conscientiously regarded the laws of friendship. But there was one of them, who excelled all the rest in his regard for me, and aspired to leave them as far behind as they left others, who were indifferent to me. He was one of those, who were always with me : for we applied to the same studies, and attended the same preceptors ; we had one common zeal and ardour for the pursuits, in which we were engaged ; our inclinations were similar, and produced by a similarity of employment. Nor was this the case, merely, while we were at school ; but, even after we had left it, when it became necessary to decide upon the course of

life, which it would be best to follow, in this point also we were of one mind : and there were other things, besides these, which contributed to preserve our unanimity unbroken : for as neither of us could value himself upon the grandeur of his country above the other, so neither was I possessed of a superfluity of wealth, while he was in the extreme of penury, but the limits of our fortunes resembled the equality of our desires. Our families too were of equal rank ; and all things favored our attachment.

But, when the time came for our entering upon that happy state, the life of monks, and the pursuit of the true philosophy, we no longer found our balance even ; but his scale, being lighter, mounted aloft, while I, being entangled in the vanities of the world, drew mine down with me, and kept it low by the weight of my youthful follies. From this time, though our friendship remained, unshaken, as before, our intercourse was interrupted ; for it was not possible for those, who had devoted their affections to different objects, to spend their time together : and even, when I at length

emerged a little from the sea of life, though he received me with open arms, we could not again resume our former equality; for now, having got the start of me in point of time, and displayed a superiority of zeal, he rose to a still greater height, and was borne to an immeasurable distance above me. Nevertheless, as he was naturally kind, and had also a great value for my friendship, he separated himself from every one else, and spent the whole of his time in my company, as indeed he would willingly have done before, had he not been withheld, as I said, by my backwardness; for it was impossible for one, who frequented the courts of justice, and was constantly hovering about the theatre, to have frequent communications with a person, who was nailed to his books, and never went to the forum.

When therefore he had at length brought me to the same way of life with himself, he at once gave birth to a project, which he had conceived long before, though he was till now restrained from declaring it: and from this time he never desisted a moment from urging it, as his wish, that we should each leave his own

home, and repair to some common habitation ; insomuch, that in fact he prevailed upon me, and the matter was in agitation. Nevertheless the continual intreaties of my mother prevented me from granting him this request, or rather from receiving this favour at his hands. For no sooner had she heard of my intention, than she took me by the right hand, and leading me into her own apartment, seated me near her upon the bed, in which I was born, and, after shedding a flood of tears, began with words, still more moving than her tears, to vent this lamentation before me.

‘ My child,’ (said she) ‘ I was not long indulged (such was the will of God) in the enjoyment of your father’s virtues: for his death, succeeding my pangs in your birth, at once entailed upon you the condition of an orphan, and upon me an untimely widowhood, together with all those miseries of widowhood, which they only, who have felt them, can appreciate ; for no description can adequately represent that troubled sea, into which a young woman, who has just quitted her father’s house, and is still inexperienced in

' the world, is suddenly thrown by that insuf-
 ' ferable calamity, by which she is driven to
 ' engage in cares beyond her sex and age, and
 ' compelled at once to superintend the idleness,
 ' and observe the misconduct of domestics, to
 ' defend herself against the cabals of her re-
 ' lations, and to sustain with fortitude both the
 ' insolence of assessors, and their rudeness
 ' in collecting the taxes: in addition to all
 ' which, should the deceased have left a child
 ' behind him, it will, even though a female,
 ' be productive of no small uneasiness to her,
 ' though in that case unaccompanied with
 ' expence or apprehension. But, if it should
 ' be a male, it will fill her every day with a
 ' thousand alarms, and still more distracting
 ' anxieties, to say nothing of the sums, which
 ' she must necessarily spend, if she would
 ' procure him a liberal education. How-
 ' ever, I was not prevailed on by any of
 ' these difficulties to engage in a second mar-
 ' riage, and to bring a second husband into
 ' your father's family, but abode the tempest
 ' and misery without shrinking from the iron
 ' furnace of widowhood: for I was in the first

‘ place assisted with strength from above, and
 ‘ secondly found no small alleviation to my
 ‘ distress in gazing continually upon your coun-
 ‘ tenance, and fostering that living image of
 ‘ my departed husband, which was so accu-
 ‘ rately delineated in your person. In this
 ‘ view, while you were yet an infant, and un-
 ‘ able to speak, which is the age, at which
 ‘ children give most delight to their parents,
 ‘ you afforded me no trifling consolation : nor
 ‘ have you moreover to say of me, that, with
 ‘ whatever resolution I bore my widowhood, I
 ‘ have yet diminished your patrimony through
 ‘ the necessities of widowhood, which has hap-
 ‘ pened to many of my acquaintance through
 ‘ falling into the unhappy condition of orphans ;
 ‘ for I have preserved it entire, and, while
 ‘ I neglected nothing, which became your situ-
 ‘ ation, have defrayed the expence of it wholly
 ‘ from my own purse, and from that pro-
 ‘ perty, which I brought with me from my
 ‘ father. Yet I would not have you imagine,
 ‘ that I say this, to upbraid you. I only in re-
 ‘ turn for all ask you one favour ; and that is,
 ‘ that you would wait for my decease, and not

‘ revive a grief, now laid to rest, by abandoning
 ‘ me to a second widowhood. It cannot be
 ‘ very long, and I shall be gone : for, though
 ‘ the young may with reason hope for length of
 ‘ days, we, who are old, have nothing to ex-
 ‘ pect, but death. As soon therefore as you
 ‘ have committed me to the dust, and laid me
 ‘ by the bones of your father, then set out upon
 ‘ your distant pilgrimage ! Sail over what sea
 ‘ you will ! There will then be none to impede
 ‘ you. Only, while I have breath, be contented
 ‘ to dwell with me ! Do not rashly or without
 ‘ any necessity provoke God by thus exposing
 ‘ me, who have never injured you, to so many
 ‘ evils ! If indeed you can charge me with
 ‘ having involved you in secular concerns, and
 ‘ obliged you to look after my own affairs, then
 ‘ disregard at once all the laws of nature, of
 ‘ your education, of our intimacy, or any other
 ‘ tie, and avoid me, as an intriguer and an
 ‘ enemy ! But, if I do every thing, that can
 ‘ secure you leisure for pursuing your present
 ‘ course of life, let this bond at least, if nothing
 ‘ else, detain you with me ! For though you
 ‘ should profess to have a thousand friends,

‘ there is none of them, who will leave you so
‘ much at liberty as I have done, since there is
‘ no one, who has a regard for your character,
‘ at all comparable to mine.’

This, and much more my mother said to me, and I reported every thing to my generous friend. Nevertheless he not only remained unmoved by these intreaties, but became still more importunate with me than before in pressing his former suit. However in the midst of this uncertainty, while he was continually intreating me, and I had not yet given my consent, a sudden rumour arose, that alarmed us both. The rumour was, that we were to be advanced to the dignity of the priesthood; on hearing which I was overwhelmed with fear and perplexity, with fear, lest I should be surprised against my will, and with perplexity, because I was unable to imagine any reason for entertaining any such design concerning me: for, when I looked into myself, I found there nothing worthy of that honour.

However, my generous friend, fancying, that I had not heard the report, came to me privately, and, when he had told me of it, begged

me to act in such a manner, that we might still be observed to agree, as we had always done hitherto, both in our sentiments and actions; for which purpose he professed himself ready to follow whatever course I might adopt, either to elude, or to accept the offer.

When therefore I saw his readiness, it occurred to me, that I should be guilty of an injury to the whole community of the church, if I were through my own unfitness to deprive the flock of Christ of a young person, who was so good, and so worthy to preside over its members: for which reason I resolved not to acquaint him with the determination I had formed, although till that time I had never left him in ignorance of any of my designs, but, telling him, that I thought it would be proper to put off our decision on the point till another opportunity, inasmuch as the matter did not immediately press, I easily induced him to think no more upon the subject, and used such means as convinced him afterwards, that, if anything of the kind should happen, I would concur with him.

After no great length of time therefore the

person arrived, who intended to ordain us. I concealed myself. He, knowing nothing of my design, is introduced to the assembly upon some other pretext, and accepts the yoke, confiding in my promise to follow him, or rather imagining, that I was gone before him: for some persons even in the assembly helped to deceive him, and, when they saw him express reluctance at being apprehended, exclaimed, that it would be strange indeed, if, when I, who was universally considered the more self-willed of the two, had yielded submissively to the decision of the fathers, he, so far my superior both in intelligence and propriety of behaviour, should kick, and start, and struggle, and shew himself both headstrong and ambitious. To these solicitations he yielded.

But, when after a time he heard, that I had escaped, he came in to me, and with shame and much confusion in his countenance, having taken his seat near me, prepared to speak, but was so overcome with perplexity, and so unable to describe the violence, that had been done him, that he had no sooner opened his mouth than he found himself incapable of utterance,

the agony and sorrow of his spirit choking the words, before they had escaped his lips. Seeing him therefore filled with tears, and overwhelmed with confusion, I, who knew the cause of it, laughed for delight, and when I had forcibly seized his right hand, and kissed it, glorified God, that my artifice had succeeded so well, and turned out so agreeably to my wishes.

When therefore he saw me so overjoyed and cheerful, though he was sensible, that I had so lately deceived him, he was the more offended, and after recovering a little from his distress said—‘Though you may now despise my interests, and have no longer (I cannot tell for what reason) your former regard for me, you might at least have been expected to shew some regard for your own character. Instead of this you have opened every one’s mouth against you. Your refusal of this ministry is universally attributed to a love of vain glory ; nor is there any one, who exempts you from this reproach. Indeed I can no longer go with comfort even into the market-place. So many are there, that daily come up, to upbraid

' me: for, when any of our acquaintance see
 ' me in the city, they all take me aside, and
 ' cast the principal part of their accusations
 ' against me. "For," (say they) "when you
 " knew his intention, as indeed none of his de-
 " signs was ever concealed from you, it was
 " your duty not to assist him in the stratagem,
 " but to make it known to us: and then we
 " should not have been in any want of means
 " to surprise him." At this charge I blush,
 ' and am ashamed to tell them, that I knew
 ' nothing of your plot beforehand, lest they
 ' should ascribe our former friendship to hypo-
 ' crisy: for indeed, notwithstanding what has
 ' happened, and which you yourself cannot
 ' deny, notwithstanding your late behaviour to
 ' me, we ought still to conceal our failings from
 ' strangers, who, even as it is, have but a poor
 ' opinion of us. It is for this cause, that I
 ' am unwilling to let them know the real state
 ' of the case, and am consequently reduced to
 ' the necessity of being silent, of looking down
 ' upon the ground, of turning aside, and getting
 ' out of the way of those, who would meet me,
 ' since, even if I could silence their first accusa-

‘ tions, they would still hold me guilty of a
 ‘ falsehood ; for they could never be persuaded,
 ‘ that you place Basil among the number of
 ‘ those, from whom you hide your intentions.
 ‘ However of all this I will say little, since it
 ‘ has proved agreeable to you. How shall we
 ‘ bear up against the obloquy, which awaits us?
 ‘ For some men charge you with contumacy,
 ‘ others with vanity, and those, who are less spa-
 ‘ ring of their reproaches, tax us with both these
 ‘ faults at once, and even add to the number
 ‘ the charge of disrespect towards those, who
 ‘ have done us honour. They even declare,
 ‘ that they would have been justly treated, had
 ‘ they met with greater neglect from us for
 ‘ having passed over so many men of high
 ‘ character, that they might gratify some little
 ‘ children of but yesterday, who are still wrap-
 ‘ ped up in the cares of life, with an occasion of
 ‘ contracting their brows for a while, and put-
 ‘ ting on a grave habit, and making a show of
 ‘ seriousness, by raising them suddenly to an
 ‘ honour, which they could not themselves have
 ‘ aspired to, even in a dream ; while those, who
 ‘ from their earliest youth to extreme age have

‘ kept a strict discipline over themselves, are
‘ subjected to their authority, and see boys set
‘ over them, that have not yet heard the laws,
‘ by which such a charge is to be governed.
‘ With such and many more reproaches they
‘ continually assail us: and what answer to
‘ make to them I know not, but request you to
‘ instruct me; for I do not suppose you could
‘ have resorted to this concealment without
‘ consideration, or that you would rashly pro-
‘ voke a quarrel with persons of such conse-
‘ quence. You must certainly have entered
‘ upon it with some reflection and premedita-
‘ tion: for which reason I presume you have
‘ some plea ready for your defence. Tell me
‘ then, how we may be prepared to offer any
‘ reasonable excuse to our accusers! For as to
‘ the injury, which I have myself sustained, I
‘ require no account of it, neither of your de-
‘ ceit, nor of your treachery, nor of the use you
‘ have hitherto had of my friendship: for I have
‘ taken up my soul, if I may so express myself,
‘ and deposited it in your hands, while you on
‘ the other hand have practised a reserve to-
‘ wards me, such as you might have practised

‘ towards an enemy. Yet surely, if you know
‘ their design to be for our advantage, you ought
‘ not to have declined the advantage yourself, or
‘ if you judged it to be mischievous, then, inas-
‘ much as you have always professed to esteem
‘ me beyond all others, you were bound to de-
‘ liver me too from the mischief; instead of
‘ which you have not merely done every thing,
‘ which could expose me to a certainty of being
‘ taken, but have even conducted yourself with
‘ the last degree of hypocrisy and deceit to-
‘ wards one, who has always behaved to you
‘ both in word and deed with the utmost can-
‘ dour and simplicity. However, as I said be-
‘ fore, I do not now lay any of these things to
‘ your charge, nor do I reproach you with the
‘ solitary condition, to which you have reduced
‘ me by putting an end to those meetings, from
‘ which we have often reaped no common de-
‘ light and advantage. All this I pass over, and
‘ will bear the whole with silence and modera-
‘ tion, not because your offence against me has
‘ been moderate, but because from the day,
‘ when I first sought your friendship, I imposed
‘ upon myself this law, that I would never re-

‘ duce you to the necessity of apologizing for
 ‘ any pain you might give me, though indeed
 ‘ you must yourself be conscious, that the wrong
 ‘ you have now done me is of no trifling conse-
 ‘ quence, if you only bear in mind what has
 ‘ always been said of us by strangers, and in-
 ‘ deed by ourselves too, namely, that it was a
 ‘ great benefit to us to be of one mind, and to
 ‘ shelter ourselves in our mutual friendship ;
 ‘ and they even added, that our unanimity
 ‘ might be of no small service to many others.
 ‘ As for any benefit indeed to others, it is
 ‘ what, as far as regards myself, I never ex-
 ‘ pected. But I have ever maintained, that
 ‘ we should be sure to gain this advantage at
 ‘ least, which is no inconsiderable one, from
 ‘ our union, that we should thereby become
 ‘ more secure from the attacks of those, who are
 ‘ ready to quarrel with us. Moreover of this
 ‘ also I have never ceased to remind you. The
 ‘ crisis is arduous, our calumniators many. The
 ‘ genuine gift of charity is gone. The pest of
 ‘ envy has succeeded. We live in the midst
 ‘ of snares. We walk upon the battlements of
 ‘ cities. If any misfortune should befall us,

‘ there are many, who would rejoice at it ; and
 ‘ they surround us from various quarters. But
 ‘ there is no one, or at least they are very few
 ‘ indeed, that would condole with us. Be cau-
 ‘ tious therefore, lest by any division we should
 ‘ incur great ridicule, and still greater loss !
 ‘ One brother, assisted by another, is, as a
 ‘ strong city, and like a fortified kingdom. Do
 ‘ not dissolve this connexion ! Do not break
 ‘ down this fortification ! These things, and
 ‘ many more I have been continually saying to
 ‘ you, not suspecting, that such an event would
 ‘ ever happen, but, though I believed your at-
 ‘ tachment to me to be sound, being yet unne-
 ‘ cessarily anxious to work a superfluous cure.
 ‘ I little thought, that I was all this while, as it
 ‘ now appears, administering medicine to the
 ‘ sick : nor yet even so unhappily did I do
 ‘ any good, or obtain any benefit by my pre-
 ‘ caution ; for you have thrown away all my
 ‘ medicines at once without regarding any of
 ‘ them, and have turned me adrift, as a vessel
 ‘ without ballast, into the boundless ocean,
 ‘ without once reflecting on those wild waves,
 ‘ which I must necessarily encounter. For, if I

' should ever be assailed by calumny, or ridicule,
 ' or any other injustice and insult, (and such
 ' things must often happen), to whom shall I fly?
 ' To whom shall I communicate my distresses?
 ' Who will defend me? Who will restrain
 ' those, that annoy me, and cause them to de-
 ' sist from their vexations? Who will give me
 ' comfort, and encourage me to endure the in-
 ' solence of others? There is no one: and you
 ' all the while are at a distance from this dread-
 ' ful warfare, and cannot even hear my cries.
 ' Now do you see, what an injury you have
 ' done me? Can you at length, after having
 ' wounded me, perceive, that the wound you
 ' have inflicted is mortal? However let this
 ' pass! For it is impossible to undo what is
 ' already done, or to provide an escape for the
 ' hopeless. What shall we say to our oppo-
 ' nents? What reply shall we make to their
 ' accusations?'

' Be not' (said I) ' uneasy! I am ready to
 ' give you an account not only of this, but, as
 ' far as may be, of those actions also, for which
 ' you are unwilling to make me accountable:
 ' and by your leave I will begin with my ex-

‘cuse to yourself; for it would be highly irrational, and even absurd, if I were to regard the opinions of strangers, and adopt every expedient, that would enable me to silence their accusations, while yet I cannot so much as persuade the dearest of all my friends, that I have not wronged him, but must appear to act towards a person, who has behaved to me with such moderation as not even to upbraid me with the wrongs he says I have done him, but still to regard only my character and interest, putting aside all thoughts of himself, with greater indifference than he has shewn zeal in my favour. In what respect then have I injured you? For it is from this point, that I propose to launch out into the deep of this vindication. Is it, that I have overreached you, and concealed my own intention? But this was for the interest both of you, whom I deceived, and of those, to whom by that deceit I betrayed you. If indeed all deceit is wrong, and never should be practised, even for a legitimate purpose, I am ready to submit to any punishment you may direct; or rather, since you will never be brought to inflict it, I

‘ will condemn myself to those penalties, to
‘ which the judges condemn similar offenders,
‘ when convicted by their accusers. But, if
‘ it be not always hurtful, but is good or bad
‘ according to the intention of those, who use
‘ it, then cease to upbraid me with deceiving
‘ you, and shew, that I have done it with a
‘ malicious design ! For as long as this is
‘ unproved, those, who would act on correct
‘ principles, ought not only to desist from
‘ blaming and accusing, but should even wel-
‘ come the deceiver : for a seasonable deceit,
‘ practised with an upright design, is pro-
‘ ductive of advantages so considerable, that
‘ many have suffered punishment for not com-
‘ mitting it. If you examine the conduct of
‘ the most approved generals in history, you
‘ will find the greater number of their trophies
‘ to have been the result of successful fraud,
‘ and these generals to have been more extolled
‘ than such as have conquered by force of arms :
‘ for the latter obtain victory at a greater ex-
‘ pence both of treasure and of blood than the
‘ former, insomuch, that they gain nothing be-
‘ yond their mere success, the conquerors being

' no less distressed both by want of money and
 ' loss of men than the conquered : besides
 ' which they cannot claim the whole honour of
 ' the victory ; of which those, who fell, receive
 ' a great part, as having conquered in spirit,
 ' though their bodies were defeated, because, if
 ' it were possible for the wounded not to fall,
 ' or if death had not put an end to their exer-
 ' tions, they would never have desisted from
 ' the struggle. On the other hand he, who
 ' contrives to conquer by stratagem, covers his
 ' enemies not only with calamity, but with con-
 ' tempt also : for in this case the two parties
 ' do not divide the reputation of talent between
 ' them, as in the other they had done that of
 ' courage, but the whole prize belongs to the
 ' victor, and, what is of no less consequence, he
 ' may convey the pleasure of the victory to his
 ' country without alloy : for it is not with the
 ' resources of genius, as it is with those of
 ' wealth and population. These are things,
 ' which by being constantly employed in war
 ' are expended, and become lost to their pos-
 ' sessors, whereas the others are even augmented
 ' by exercise. The frequent use however, and

‘ the necessity of fraud are discernible not only
 ‘ in war, but in peace too, not only in affairs of
 ‘ state, but even in a family, being practised by
 ‘ men to their wives, and by wives to their hus-
 ‘ bands, by fathers to their sons, and by friends
 ‘ to their friends, and even by children to their
 ‘ parents : for the daughter of Saul was only
 ‘ able to deliver her husband from the hands
 ‘ of her father by misleading him : and in like
 ‘ manner her brother with a view of rescuing
 ‘ the same person, whom she had preserved,
 ‘ from a subsequent danger, employed the same
 ‘ weapons, which she had made use of.’

Upon this Basil says. ‘ But none of these
 ‘ examples apply to me : for I am neither an
 ‘ opponent, nor an enemy ; nor have I ever
 ‘ attempted to injure you, but directly the con-
 ‘ trary : for I have trusted in every thing to
 ‘ your judgment, and in all respects followed
 ‘ your direction.’

‘ True,’ (said I), ‘ my best and most honored
 ‘ friend ; and it was for that reason, that I just
 ‘ now said it is honorable to use deceit not only
 ‘ in war, nor only against enemies, but in peace
 ‘ also, and towards the dearest intimates. But,

‘ if you would be convinced, that fraud is some-
 ‘ times for the interest not only of the deceiver,
 ‘ but of the deceived, go to any of the physi-
 ‘ cians, and ask him, how he heals the distem-
 ‘ pers of his patients ! and he will tell you, that
 ‘ he is not contented with science only, but
 ‘ with a view to recover the invalid sometimes
 ‘ calls in deceit in aid of his professional skill :
 ‘ for, when the patient’s waywardness and the
 ‘ obstinacy of the disease reject the physician’s
 ‘ advice, it then becomes necessary to put on
 ‘ the mask of deceit, that they may be able to
 ‘ disguise, as upon the stage, the real state of
 ‘ the fact. If you choose then, I will tell you
 ‘ one stratagem out of many, which (I have
 ‘ heard) was once practised by a physician. A
 ‘ man was suddenly taken ill with a violent
 ‘ fever ; and though it increased exceedingly,
 ‘ yet the sick man refused every thing, that had
 ‘ a tendency to reduce the inflammation. On
 ‘ the contrary the poor wretch wanted, and
 ‘ earnestly begged every one, who came to him,
 ‘ to give him a large draught of wine, to gratify
 ‘ his perverted taste ; which whoever granted
 ‘ him, would not only aggravate the fever, but

‘ drive him to certain madness. Upon this the
‘ faculty, being at a stand, as all their recom-
‘ mendations were rejected, had recourse to
‘ stratagem; and the effect was such as you
‘ shall presently hear. The physician, having
‘ taken an earthen cup from the pottery, and
‘ dipped it in wine, brought it out again empty,
‘ and filled it with water. He then gives orders
‘ to darken the room, where the sick man lay,
‘ with a quantity of furniture, that the light
‘ might not discover the trick, and offers him the
‘ cup to drink, as if it had been filled with pure
‘ wine. The man, before he took it into his
‘ hands, being deceived by the flavour, did not
‘ wait, to examine minutely what was given him,
‘ but, trusting to his misconception, and being
‘ at once deluded by the darkness and impelled
‘ by his thirst, caught what was offered to him
‘ with much eagerness, and drank it off; after
‘ which he soon got rid of the inflammation, and
‘ escaped the impending danger. You perceive
‘ the advantage of that deceit. Should any one
‘ indeed attempt to enumerate all the strata-
‘ gems of physicians, the tale would soon swell
‘ to an immeasurable length. Nor is this expe-

' dient serviceable to those only, who heal the
 ' body, but to those also, who have to treat the
 ' disorders of the soul. It was thus, that saint
 ' Paul won the many multitudes of Jews. It
 ' was with this view, that he, who wrote to the
 ' Galatians—"If ye be circumcised, Christ shall
 ' profit you nothing,"—yet consented to circum-
 ' cise Timothy. It was with this design, that
 ' he, who counted the righteousness, which is
 ' in the law, to be but loss after faith in Christ,
 ' yet became subject to the law. For the prac-
 ' tice of deceit has many advantages, provided
 ' only it be not employed with a fraudulent de-
 ' sign; or rather, when so used, it should not
 ' be called deceit, but policy and skill, an
 ' art that provides many resources in cases of
 ' perplexity, and tends to correct the errors of
 ' the soul: for I should not call Phinehas
 ' a murderer, although he killed two persons
 ' with one stroke, nor Elijah notwithstand-
 ' ing the hundred soldiers with their captains,
 ' whom he slew, and the torrent of blood, which
 ' he shed from those, who had sacrificed to de-
 ' mons; for, could this be granted, and were
 ' actions to be considered independently with-

‘ out reference to the intention of those, who
 ‘ performed them, it would be easy to convict
 ‘ even Abraham of infanticide, or to find his
 ‘ grandson guilty of injustice, and his descend-
 ‘ ant of fraud ; for it was by such artifices, that
 ‘ the one obtained the birthright, and that the
 ‘ other transferred the wealth of the Egyptians
 ‘ to the army of the Israelites. But this would
 ‘ be impossible, utterly impossible. Away with
 ‘ any such presumption ! For we not only ab-
 ‘ solve them from blame, but even admire them
 ‘ for these actions ; for which indeed God also
 ‘ has commended them. For he is not to be
 ‘ called a deceiver, who resorts to stratagem, to
 ‘ effect a righteous purpose, but he, who makes
 ‘ use of it from improper motives. There may
 ‘ be cases, in which deception is a duty, and
 ‘ one, by which the greatest good may be
 ‘ effected : and in such cases he, who acts with
 ‘ integrity, would do a serious injury to the
 ‘ person, whom he neglected to deceive.’

BOOK THE SECOND.

‘ MORE might be said in defence of the maxim,
‘ that it is in some cases honorable to deceive,
‘ or rather, that in such cases the name of de-
‘ ception is inadmissible, and they ought rather
‘ to be described, as specimens of admirable
‘ policy. However, since what has been said is
‘ enough to determine the question, it would be
‘ irksome to add unnecessary length to my re-
‘ marks. It is now your business to demon-
‘ strate, that what I have done has not been for
‘ your advantage.’

‘ And what advantage have I gained’ (said he) ‘ from this policy, or skill of yours (call it
‘ by what name you will), which should prove
‘ to me, that you have not deceived me ?’

‘ What advantage’ (said I) ‘ can be greater
‘ than to be engaged in the public exercise of
‘ those duties, which Christ himself has pro-
‘ nounced to be an evidence of love for himself ?’

‘ For, speaking to the chief of his apostles, he
 ‘ asked him—“ Peter, lovest thou me ?”—and
 ‘ then, when he had answered the question in
 ‘ the affirmative, subjoined—“ If thou love me,
 “ feed my sheep!” The master asks the disciple,
 ‘ whether he loves him, not that he may himself
 ‘ be informed (for how can he receive informa-
 ‘ tion, who searches the very hearts of all men ?)
 ‘ but to convince us, how deeply he is con-
 ‘ cerned for the government of his sheep ; from
 ‘ which tenderness and concern we may ration-
 ‘ ally infer, how vast and unspeakable a reward
 ‘ is laid up for every one, who labors in the
 ‘ performance of duties, on which Christ has set
 ‘ so high a value. For, if we regard the atten-
 ‘ tion, which others bestow on our domestics or
 ‘ cattle, as an evidence of their love for our-
 ‘ selves, although these are possessions, which
 ‘ may be purchased for money, how will he re-
 ‘ ward his shepherds, who has bought his flock,
 ‘ not with money, or with any thing of that
 ‘ kind, but by his own death, and who gave his
 ‘ blood, as the price of his sheep ? For this
 ‘ cause, when the disciple said—“ Lord, thou
 “ knowest, that I love thee,”—and called upon

‘ the person, whom he loved, to be a witness of
 ‘ the love, which he bore him, the Saviour was
 ‘ not satisfied with this answer, but required a
 ‘ further proof of that love : for it was not then
 ‘ his object to shew, how Peter loved him ; for
 ‘ that had been shewn before by repeated in-
 ‘ stances : but he wished Peter and all of us to
 ‘ observe, how much he himself loves the church,
 ‘ that hence we also might be led to display an
 ‘ active zeal in its service. For why would not
 ‘ God spare, why did he give up his only begot-
 ‘ ten son ? It was, that he might reconcile his
 ‘ enemies to himself, and make them a peculiar
 ‘ people. And why did he shed his blood ?
 ‘ That he might become the proprietor of those
 ‘ sheep, which he then committed to Peter, and
 ‘ to his successors. With reason then did Christ
 ‘ say—“ Who is the faithful and wise steward,
 ‘ “ whom his lord shall make ruler over his house-
 ‘ “ hold ?” For though these words are in the
 ‘ form of doubting, yet he, who spoke them,
 ‘ spoke them not in any doubt. But as he
 ‘ asked Peter, whether he loved him, not to in-
 ‘ form himself of that disciple’s affection, but to
 ‘ shew the abundance of his own love, so here

‘ also, when he says—“ Who then is the faith-
 “ ful and wise steward ? ”—he does not say it,
 ‘ because he is ignorant, who is faithful and
 ‘ wise, but that he may illustrate the rarity of
 ‘ the character, as well as the importance of
 ‘ this ministry. Then observe too, how noble
 ‘ the prize is ! “ He will set him ” (says he),
 “ over all, that he hath.” Will you still then
 ‘ maintain against me, that I have not deceived
 ‘ you to your advantage, when you are on the
 ‘ point of being set over all, that God has,
 ‘ and to be engaged in the practice of those
 ‘ offices, which when Peter performed, we are
 ‘ left to infer, that he had excelled the rest
 ‘ even of the apostles ? For his language is—
 “ Peter, lovest thou me more than these ?
 “ Feed my sheep ! ” He might have said to
 ‘ him—“ If thou love me, fast continually !
 “ Lie upon the ground ! Be always watch-
 “ ing ! Patronize the oppressed ! Be, as a
 “ father to the orphans, and instead of a hus-
 “ band to their mother ! ” But he omits all
 ‘ these directions : and what does he say ?
 “ Feed my sheep ! ” For many of those under
 ‘ his authority, and that not only men, but

' women, might be able to do with ease all,
 ' that I have now mentioned. But, when the
 ' thing wanted is to preside over a church, and
 ' the charge to be committed is that of many
 ' souls, let the whole female sex and the greater
 ' number of men retire from the magnitude of
 ' the duty ! and let those be brought forward,
 ' who are vastly superior to the rest of mankind,
 ' and as much above them all in virtue, as Saul
 ' was higher than the whole nation of the He-
 ' brews in stature, or rather much more so !
 ' For in this matter I would not require the
 ' mere distance from the shoulders upward, but
 ' rather as wide a difference between the shep-
 ' herd and his sheep as between rational and
 ' irrational beings, not to say even wider, in
 ' proportion as greater interests are brought into
 ' hazard : for he, who has lost sheep, whether
 ' they be torn by wolves, or stolen by thieves,
 ' or destroyed by murrain, or have fallen a prey
 ' to any other accident, may possibly obtain for-
 ' giveness from the owner of the flock ; or, if
 ' justice should be exacted from him, he may
 ' defray the penalty in money. But whoever
 ' has had men, the rational flock of Christ,

' committed to him, in the first place subjects
 ' himself to a penalty not in money, but in his
 ' own soul, in case any of the sheep should
 ' perish, and besides this engages in a struggle
 ' far more arduous, and full of much greater
 ' dangers: for his battle is not with wolves;
 ' nor is he alarmed by robbers, or anxious to
 ' keep a murrain from his flock. But against
 ' whom is his warfare? and with whom is his
 ' wrestling? Hear the blessed Paul, who de-
 ' clares—"We wrestle not against flesh and
 ' blood, but against principalities, against
 ' powers, against the rulers of the darkness of
 ' this world, against spiritual wickedness in
 ' high places." You see a formidable array of
 ' enemies, and dreadful phalanxes, not armed
 ' with steel, but furnished by nature with an
 ' equivalent to the completest panoply. Would
 ' you survey another merciless and cruel army,
 ' lying in ambush against the flock? This also
 ' you shall see from the same vantage-ground:
 ' for the instructor, who shewed us the former
 ' enemies, discloses these also, where he says—
 ' "The works of the flesh are manifest, which
 ' are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness,

“ lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred,
 “ variance, emulations, wraths, strifes, back-
 “ bitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults, and
 “ others, more than these”—: for he has not
 ‘ counted up the whole, but only by these sam-
 ‘ ples enabled us to form a judgment of the re-
 ‘ mainder. Again with respect to the keeper
 ‘ of brute animals, if those, who come to plun-
 ‘ der the flock, see the person, who has the
 ‘ charge of it, run away, they are satisfied with
 ‘ carrying off the sheep. But in this case,
 ‘ though they should have seized the whole
 ‘ flock, they are not thereby induced to abstain
 ‘ from the shepherd, but rather attack him with
 ‘ greater fury, and are more emboldened ; nor
 ‘ will they desist, till they have either over-
 ‘ powered him, or been themselves subdued.
 ‘ Moreover the distempers of cattle are easily
 ‘ discerned, whether hunger, or murrain, or
 ‘ wound, or any thing else, that can give pain ;
 ‘ and the knowledge of this contributes not a
 ‘ little towards the removal of the mischief. In
 ‘ the management of cattle also there is another
 ‘ and a still greater help towards a speedy cure
 ‘ of their diseases : and what is that ? It is the

' absolute authority, with which the shepherds
 ' compel the sheep to receive the remedy,
 ' whenever they do not willingly submit to it,
 ' there being no difficulty either in binding
 ' them, when the caustic or the knife is to be
 ' used, or in confining them for a considerable
 ' time under shelter, when that is good for
 ' them, or in supplying them with one kind of
 ' food after another, or in keeping them away
 ' from the streams, or in supplying them with
 ' any other necessities, which may be judged
 ' conducive to their recovery. But in regard
 ' to the infirmities of men it is in the first place
 ' no easy matter to discern them: for no man
 ' knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit
 ' of man, which is in him. How then is it
 ' possible to administer medicine to a disease,
 ' the nature of which is not understood, and
 ' often indeed, when it is not clear, whether the
 ' individual be indeed distempered? If however
 ' it be plain, that he is distempered, in that
 ' case he occasions still further trouble, since
 ' men are not to be healed with the same au-
 ' thority, with which a shepherd governs his
 ' sheep: for though here also there is need both

‘ to bind, and to keep from pasture, and to
 ‘ apply the caustic and the knife, yet it is here
 ‘ at the option of the patient, and not of the
 ‘ physician, whether the remedy shall be used ;
 ‘ and this is what that admirable man meant,
 ‘ when he said to the Corinthians,—“ Not for
 ‘ that we have dominion over your faith, but
 ‘ are helpers of your joy.” For of all men
 ‘ Christians are the least defensible, if they
 ‘ attempt to correct the errors of the wicked by
 ‘ force. Worldly judges indeed, when they
 ‘ have brought malefactors under the power of
 ‘ the laws, exercise great authority, and compel
 ‘ them against their will to submit to their
 ‘ directions. But in the church individuals
 ‘ must be made better not by force, but by
 ‘ persuasion : for the laws have vested no such
 ‘ authority in us for the punishment of offen-
 ‘ ders ; nor indeed, if they had, would any oc-
 ‘ casion be afforded us for the exercise of this
 ‘ power, because the Lord does not crown those,
 ‘ who abstain from wickedness through neces-
 ‘ sity, but those, who abstain from it by choice.
 ‘ Hence there is need of much contrivance, to
 ‘ persuade patients to submit willingly to the

' prescriptions of the priests, and not only so,
 ' but to make them grateful for their treatment :
 ' for, if after being bound they should start
 ' (and they always have the power to do so),
 ' they aggravate the evil ; and, if they neglect
 ' the words, which cut, like steel, they incur
 ' a new wound through their heedlessness, what
 ' was designed to heal them becoming thus
 ' the cause of exasperating the malady : for no
 ' one can be put under such restraint as to be
 ' healed against his will. What can be done
 ' therefore ? For if, where incision is necessary,
 ' you should substitute a milder treatment, and
 ' not cut deep, where it is wanted, you would
 ' pare away one part of the evil, and leave
 ' another ; and yet on the other hand, if you
 ' use the knife without sparing, the patient,
 ' being driven to despair by the agony of his
 ' sufferings, often throws away at once both
 ' medicine and bandage, and, breaking the yoke,
 ' and bursting the chain, casts himself down a
 ' precipice. Indeed I could cite many instances
 ' of persons, who in consequence of being
 ' visited with a penalty, proportioned to their
 ' crimes, have plunged themselves into the worst

' of evils. Hence it is not enough to pronounce
 ' a sentence, suited to the measure of the
 ' offence. You must also guess at the disposi-
 ' tion of the offender, lest through your eager-
 ' ness to sew up the rent you should make it
 ' worse, and in your haste to raise the fallen
 ' should render the fall greater. For the ener-
 ' vated and dissolute, who have for the most
 ' part been entangled in the luxuries of the
 ' world, and are commonly vain of their high
 ' birth or power, may be in part at least,
 ' if not wholly, reclaimed from their evil ways,
 ' if on occasion of any sins, of which they may
 ' be guilty, they be corrected quietly, and
 ' by little and little, whereas the application of a
 ' sudden and complete discipline would deprive
 ' them of even that imperfect amendment: for
 ' the soul, that has once lost its sense of shame,
 ' degenerates into a torpid and insensible con-
 ' dition, and is no longer susceptible of iupres-
 ' sion from persuasive reasoning, or capable of
 ' being either moved by threats, or encouraged
 ' by benefits. It sinks even into a worse state
 ' than that city, which was reproved by the
 ' prophet in these words—"Thou hadst a

“whore’s forehead, Thou refusedst to be
 “ashamed.” For this reason the pastor has
 ‘need of much intelligence, and of numerous
 ‘eyes also, that he may discern the whole
 ‘habit of the soul : for, if some are rendered
 ‘obdurate, and driven to despair of their
 ‘salvation through their unfitness to endure
 ‘painful medicines, there are others on the con-
 ‘trary, who for want of some punishment,
 ‘suited to their past offences, are brought into
 ‘a state of recklessness, and thus tempted to
 ‘commit greater. It is therefore necessary,
 ‘that he, who is consecrated to this office, should
 ‘leave none of these matters unexamined, but
 ‘after diligent inquiry into them all should
 ‘apply his remedies suitably, that his pains
 ‘may not be ineffectual.

‘It is obvious however, that these are not
 ‘his only difficulties. He will meet with many
 ‘others also in setting the fractured limbs of
 ‘the church. For he, who has sheep under
 ‘his management, is followed by the flock,
 ‘wherever he leads the way, so, that, if any
 ‘of them should wander out of the road, and,
 ‘forsaking the good pasture, browse on poor

' and rocky spots, he is able by only exerting
 ' his voice to reassemble them at pleasure, and
 ' bring back the stragglers to the flock. But,
 ' when a man wanders from the right faith, the
 ' spiritual shepherd has much cause for in-
 ' dustry, perseverance, and patience: for he
 ' cannot drag him by force, or compel him to
 ' come back, but must lead him with caution,
 ' first convincing him of the truth, from which
 ' he originally fell. He has need therefore of
 ' a strong mind, that will not sink or despair
 ' of the salvation of those, who have gone
 ' astray, but be considerate, and cherish hope,
 ' if God peradventure will give them repen-
 ' tance to the acknowledging of the truth, and
 ' that they may recover themselves out of the
 ' snare of the devil. It was with this view,
 ' that the Lord said to his disciples—"Who
 ' then is the faithful and wise steward?" For
 ' the man, who exercises discipline over him-
 ' self, benefits himself alone, whereas the advan-
 ' tage of the pastoral office extends to the whole
 ' people; and although a person, who distri-
 ' butes money among the needy, or otherwise
 ' protects the injured, does indeed some good

‘ to his neighbour, his services are as much
 ‘ inferior to those conferred by the priest as the
 ‘ soul is better than the body. With reason
 ‘ then did the Lord declare, that zeal for his
 ‘ flock is a sign of love to himself.’

‘ But ’ (said Basil) ‘ do not you then love
 ‘ Christ ? ’

‘ I both love him,’ (replied I), ‘ and shall
 ‘ never cease to love him. But yet I fear to
 ‘ exasperate the being, whom I love.’

Upon this Basil exclaimed—‘ Now what enigma
 ‘ can there be, more inexplicable than this,
 ‘ that, whereas Christ ordered the disciple,
 ‘ who loved him, to feed his sheep, you assign,
 ‘ as a reason for not feeding them, that you
 ‘ love him, who ordered it ? ’

‘ It is no enigma ’ (said I), ‘ but a plain and
 ‘ simple statement : for, if I were competent
 ‘ to discharge this duty according to the will of
 ‘ Christ, and yet shrunk from the task, the
 ‘ declaration I have just made might reasonably
 ‘ perplex you. But, since the infirmities of my
 ‘ soul render me unfit for that ministry, how is
 ‘ your question called for by my observation ?
 ‘ For my fear is, lest after receiving the flock

‘ of Christ in good condition, and in a rich
 ‘ pasturage, I should injure it by my unskil-
 ‘ fulness, and so exasperate that God against
 ‘ me, whose love for it was such, that he
 ‘ even gave himself up for its salvation and
 ‘ glory.’

‘ You are jesting’—said he. ‘ For, if you
 ‘ were in earnest, I cannot conceive any course
 ‘ of reasoning, better suited to justify my quar-
 ‘ rel with you than that, by which you have
 ‘ attempted to obviate my complaint. For,
 ‘ though I was convinced before, that you had
 ‘ deceived and betrayed me, I am now much
 ‘ more certain of it than ever. I now see clearly
 ‘ in your manner of evading my charge the
 ‘ evil, to which you have reduced me: for, if
 ‘ you shrunk from this office yourself through
 ‘ a consciousness, that you were unqualified
 ‘ for so weighty a duty, you ought first to
 ‘ have withheld me from engaging in it,
 ‘ though I had been ever so anxious for it, how
 ‘ much more then, when I had entrusted you
 ‘ with the whole of my design! You on the
 ‘ contrary, while you saw your own case so
 ‘ clearly, overlooked mine: or rather I wish

' you had overlooked it ; for then I could have
 ' been contented. But you have moreover laid
 ' a plot, that I might become an easy prey to
 ' those, who were desirous to take me : for you
 ' cannot pretend, that you were deceived by the
 ' opinion of the multitude, who persuaded you
 ' to form an extravagant estimate of my charac-
 ' ter, since I am not a distinguished person,
 ' and have no admirers among them ; nor yet,
 ' if I were, ought you to value the opinion of
 ' the multitude above the truth. If indeed you
 ' had never been in my company, or at all con-
 ' nected with me, there might seem to be some
 ' plausible excuse for your concurrence with
 ' others. But, since you are better acquainted
 ' with every thing, that belongs to me, since you
 ' know my mind more fully than even my
 ' parents and instructors themselves, what de-
 ' fence can you make, or how persuade any
 ' one, that you have not of your own accord
 ' brought me into this danger ? But enough of
 ' this. I do not wish to put you upon your
 ' defence about it. Tell me, what apology we
 ' shall make to those, who censure us !'

' Nay'—said I. ' I cannot consent to enter

' upon that subject, before I have explained my
 ' conduct towards yourself, not, though you
 ' were willing a thousand times over to release
 ' me from these charges. Had I been igno-
 ' rant, (you said), I might have obtained for-
 ' giveness. Had I brought you into your present
 ' situation without knowing you, in that case
 ' you would discharge me from all blame. But,
 ' since I betrayed you not ignorantly, but upon
 ' the most accurate knowledge of your charac-
 ' ter, for this reason you allege, that every
 ' plausible pretext and reasonable excuse is
 ' taken away. Now I hold the very reverse of
 ' all this: and on what grounds? Because it
 ' is an affair, that demands serious examination,
 ' and because in order to recommend any one
 ' to the priestly office, it is not enough to be
 ' satisfied upon general report, but in addition to
 ' vague surmises, and before and above them all
 ' to have made an accurate and personal inquiry
 ' into his qualifications: for, when the holy
 ' Paul says—"He must have a good report
 ' " of them, which are without"—, he does not
 ' exclude an exact and painful inquiry; nor
 ' does he propose the judgment of strangers,

‘ as the principal evidence to be sought ; for he
 ‘ first enumerates many other requisites, and
 ‘ only adds this, as the last of them, to shew,
 ‘ that we ought not to be satisfied with the
 ‘ others alone in elections of this nature, but
 ‘ should have recourse to this also in conjunc-
 ‘ tion with the rest, because, though common
 ‘ report is itself frequently erroneous, yet, when
 ‘ backed by an accurate investigation of fact,
 ‘ it is no longer liable to suspicion. For this
 ‘ reason he stations the report of them, which
 ‘ are without, in the last place : for he does not
 ‘ say merely—“ He must have a good report”—,
 ‘ but subjoins the clause—“ Of them, which
 ‘ are without”—, that he may thereby enforce
 ‘ the necessity of a particular and personal in-
 ‘ quiry, prior to the report of them, which are
 ‘ without. Since therefore, as you have just
 ‘ confessed, I knew all your qualifications
 ‘ better even than your parents did, for
 ‘ this reason I ought to be exempted from all
 ‘ blame.’

‘ Nay’—says he. ‘ For that very reason you
 ‘ could not possibly be acquitted, if there were
 ‘ any disposition to put you upon your trial. Do

‘ you not remember learning from myself, and
 ‘ often observing by my actions the poverty and
 ‘ littleness of my soul? Have you not been
 ‘ constantly laughing at me for my weakness,
 ‘ because I easily gave way to any accidental
 ‘ uneasiness?’

‘ I do remember’ (said I) ‘ often hearing such
 ‘ expressions from you. That I cannot deny.
 ‘ But, if I ever laughed at you for this, I did
 ‘ it only in the way of banter, and not seriously.
 ‘ However, I do not contend with you now
 ‘ upon these points; and on the other hand I
 ‘ lay claim to equal candour from you, when I
 ‘ proceed to remind you of some of your good
 ‘ qualities; in which if you attempt to convict
 ‘ me of any error, I will not spare you, but
 ‘ will prove, that your declarations are prompted
 ‘ by modesty, and not by truth; which I will
 ‘ do without calling any other witnesses in sup-
 ‘ port of my assertions, but your own words
 ‘ and actions: and first I beg leave to ask you
 ‘ this question. Are you sensible, how great
 ‘ the value of love is? For Christ, overlooking
 ‘ all the miracles, which were soon to be wrought
 ‘ by the apostles, says only—“ By this shall

“ all men know, that ye are my disciples, if
 “ ye have love, one to another ”— ; and Paul
 ‘ says, that love is the fulfilling of the law, and
 ‘ again, that all gifts are valueless without it.
 ‘ This excellent quality, the distinguishing
 ‘ mark of Christ’s disciples, I saw deeply im-
 ‘ planted in your soul, and shooting up into
 ‘ an abundance of fruit.’

Upon this Basil says. ‘ That I have great
 ‘ esteem for the priestly office, and that I am
 ‘ particularly zealous in behalf of this particular
 ‘ commandment, I am ready to acknowledge.
 ‘ But, that I have not half fulfilled it, you could
 ‘ not but yourself bear me witness, if instead of
 ‘ flattering you would maintain a proper
 ‘ regard to truth.’

‘ Well,’—said I. ‘ Then I will turn to the
 ‘ proofs, and will put my threat into execution
 ‘ by demonstrating, that you yourself speak
 ‘ more from diffidence than from the evidence
 ‘ of fact : and I will call to your mind an inci-
 ‘ dent, which happened recently, lest the men-
 ‘ tion of any old transaction should excite a
 ‘ suspicion, that I wish to involve the truth in
 ‘ obscurity through distance of time, when

' the real state of the case would not support
 ' me in what I might be induced to say from
 ' partiality or friendship : for, when an in-
 ' formation was laid against one of our inti-
 ' mate friends upon a false charge of injustice
 ' and contumacy, by which he was exposed to
 ' imminent danger, you without being yourself
 ' accused, without being solicited by the per-
 ' son, whose interests were at stake, threw your-
 ' self voluntarily into the midst of the danger.
 ' So much for your actions. That I may con-
 ' vict you from your words also, when some
 ' persons did not approve of this zeal, and
 ' others extolled and admired it, you said to
 ' these, who upbraided you—"How could I
 " act otherwise ? For I know no other way of
 " testifying my love than by exposing my own
 " life, when it is necessary, to save any of my
 " friends, who are in danger"—,thus saying
 ' with Christ, in other words indeed, when,
 ' he was explaining to his disciples the ex-
 ' tent and limit of perfect love, but to the same
 ' effect—"Greater love hath no man than this,
 " that a man lay down his life for his friends."
 ' If therefore it be impossible to find greater

‘ love than this, you have already arrived at the
 ‘ height of it, and are proved both by your words
 ‘ and actions to have already attained it in its
 ‘ perfection. For this reason it was, that I
 ‘ betrayed you. For this I concerted that stra-
 ‘ tagem. Are you yet satisfied, that I did it
 ‘ with no evil design, with no wish to lead you
 ‘ into danger, but have forced you into this
 ‘ public career, because I knew, that it would
 ‘ be productive of good ?’

‘ Then you think the power of love’ (said he)
 ‘ to be itself sufficient for correcting the errors
 ‘ of our neighbours.’

‘ Undoubtedly’ (I replied) ‘ it will do a great
 ‘ deal towards it. But, if you wish me to pro-
 ‘ duce specimens of your prudence also, I will
 ‘ go to that next, and shew, that you are even
 ‘ more wise than benevolent.’

Upon this he blushed, like crimson, and said
 —‘ Let us have done with this discussion of my
 ‘ character ! For I never from the very first
 ‘ exacted from you any account of what you
 ‘ have done. But, if you have any suitable
 ‘ answer to make to them, which are without,
 ‘ I will hear what you have to say upon that

‘ subject with pleasure. Desist then from fighting with a shadow, and tell me, what defence we can offer to others, as well those, who have thought us worthy of this honour, as those, who have taken offence at us for treating them with contempt !’

‘ I am myself hastening to that point’—said I. ‘ For, having finished what I had to say respecting your qualifications, I now apply myself readily to the matter of this apology. What then is the accusation ? What are the charges ?’

‘ They allege,’ (said he,) ‘ that we have treated them with insolence and indignity in not accepting the honour, which they wished to confer.’

‘ First then I answer,’ (said I,) ‘ that we ought not to concern ourselves about any dishonour to men, when by shewing them respect we should be forced to offend God. But in fact as to the offence, taken at our conduct in this instance, I would not say, that it is altogether without peril, or even, that it will not be productive of much mischief to those very persons, who feel themselves offended ;

‘ for I hold, that all, who are devoted to God,
 ‘ and look to him alone, ought to possess too
 ‘ much equanimity and moderation to regard
 ‘ such an act as this in the light of an insult,
 ‘ even though they had been slighted much more
 ‘ than they have been. However it is manifest
 ‘ from this, that I have not been designedly
 ‘ guilty of anything of the kind. For, if I had
 ‘ acted, as I have, from contumacy, or vanity,
 ‘ of which you say I am often accused, I should
 ‘ have committed an offence of the most aggra-
 ‘ vated kind in despising men of considerable
 ‘ rank and merit, and those too, our own bene-
 ‘ factors: for, if to injure persons, who have
 ‘ never injured us, be worthy of punishment,
 ‘ how serious a duty must it be to honor those,
 ‘ who have previously chosen to do us honour!
 ‘ For it cannot be alleged, that the individuals
 ‘ in question have received any favour from me,
 ‘ great or small, for which they were anxious to
 ‘ make a return. How heinous then would it
 ‘ be to repay their kindness with the contrary!
 ‘ But now, if I have had no such intention, but
 ‘ have eluded the heavy weight, prepared for
 ‘ me, from other motives, why will they not

‘ make some allowances? Why, even though
 ‘ they do not approve, must they upbraid me
 ‘ for having spared their consciences? For so far
 ‘ am I from having treated them with insolence
 ‘ or contempt, that I have shewn my respect
 ‘ for them by the refusal. Be not surprised at
 ‘ a statement, so contrary to the general opinion!
 ‘ For I will soon explain the paradox, since,
 ‘ had I acted otherwise, all people, or at
 ‘ least all, who are addicted to calumny, would
 ‘ have had much ground for suspicion and com-
 ‘ plaint on account of my ordination, and that
 ‘ not only against me, but against those, who
 ‘ made choice of me, as for instance, that they
 ‘ regard wealth, and are attracted by birth, or
 ‘ that they must have been flattered by me,
 ‘ before they brought me forward. If they had
 ‘ even said, that I had bribed them, I should
 ‘ have no means of refuting their surmises.
 “ Christ ” (they would say) “ called to this high
 “ office fishermen, and tentmakers, and collec-
 “ tors of tribute. But these men despise all,
 “ who support themselves by their daily indus-
 “ try, while, if there be one, who dabbles in
 “ foreign languages, and is brought up in idle-

“ness, him they accept and admire : for else
 “why did they pass by all those, who undergo
 “continual toils in the service of the church,
 “and advance a person to this dignity un-
 “expectedly, who is a stranger to labour, and
 “has spent all his time in the idle pursuit of
 “foreign literature ?” This, and more than this
 ‘they might have said, if I had accepted this
 ‘appointment. But now they cannot say it :
 ‘for all occasion of calumny is taken away ;
 ‘and they can no longer tax either me with
 ‘flattery, or them with corruption without in-
 ‘curring the charge of downright madness : for
 ‘can it be imagined, that a person, who flatters,
 ‘and gives money, to procure this distinction,
 ‘would abandon it at the very moment, when it
 ‘is within his reach ? This would be the same
 ‘thing, as if after having taken much trouble
 ‘about a farm, that the land might be covered
 ‘with large crops, and the wine-presses burst
 ‘out with wine, after great fatigue and much
 ‘expence, when the time for reaping and
 ‘gathering arrived, the owner should give up
 ‘the produce to others. You perceive, that in
 ‘the case I have supposed, though these decla-

‘ rations would still be far from true, yet any
 ‘ persons, who were disposed to accuse our su-
 ‘ periors of forming their election upon wrong
 ‘ principles, would at least have some pretext,
 ‘ whereas my present conduct has left them
 ‘ no opportunity for opening their mouth.

‘ All this, and much more would be urged
 ‘ against us on our first appointment. But,
 ‘ when we had entered upon our ministry,
 ‘ we should be unable to answer the remarks,
 ‘ which would be made upon us every day,
 ‘ even though we should do all things cor-
 ‘ rectly, much more, when through our youth
 ‘ and inexperience we should be driven into
 ‘ many faults. From this charge we have now
 ‘ released them, whereas then we should have
 ‘ involved them in numberless reproaches. For
 ‘ what would not the objectors say? “They
 ‘ have committed this vast, this weighty charge,
 ‘ to silly boys. They have injured the flock
 ‘ of God. The concerns of christians have
 ‘ become a subject of jest and laughter.” Now
 ‘ however all Iniquity shall stop her mouth :
 ‘ for, even though they should make these alle-
 ‘ gations on your account, you will soon teach

‘ them by your conduct, that it is wrong either
‘ to measure the understanding of a person by
‘ his youth, or to approve of an old man for
‘ his hoary hairs, and that they ought not to
‘ exclude every young man, but only a novice
‘ from the ministry ; for there is a great diffe-
‘ rence between the two.

BOOK THE THIRD.

‘ I HAVE now answered the charge of disrespect
‘ towards my superiors, and proved, that when
‘ I declined the honour they intended me, I
‘ did it without any intention of treating them
‘ with contempt. I will next set myself to
‘ convince you to the best of my ability, that
‘ I did not act in this manner out of pride or
‘ arrogance.

‘ Had an offer indeed been made me to com-
‘ mand an army or a kingdom, and had I then
‘ adopted this resolution, there might have been
‘ some ground for such a suspicion ; or rather
‘ in that case my conduct would have been uni-
‘ versally ascribed to stupidity, and not to arro-
‘ gance. But, when an offer is made me of
‘ the priesthood, which is as much more honor-
‘ able than a kingdom as the spirit is superior
‘ to the flesh, will any one dare to pronounce
‘ me guilty of despising the office ? Nay. Is

' there no absurdity in attributing the rejection
 ' of an inferior offer to idiocy, while those, who
 ' do the same thing in a matter of much higher
 ' moment, are deprived of the excuse of mad-
 ' ness, and subjected to the imputation of
 ' vanity? It is much as if we were to set down
 ' a person, who was above minding a few oxen,
 ' and refused to be a herdsman, not for a proud
 ' man, but for an idiot, and then to pronounce
 ' another, who refused the kingdom of all the
 ' world, and the command of all the armies of
 ' every country, not mad, but haughty. But it
 ' is not so. Undoubtedly it is not; nor do those,
 ' who set up this pretence, bring any charge
 ' against me, which is not equally applicable to
 ' themselves; for by only conceiving it possible,
 ' that human nature should look with contempt
 ' upon that dignity, my accusers themselves
 ' furnish me with a proof of the estimation, in
 ' which they hold the employment: for, had
 ' they not looked upon it, as an employment
 ' of common minds, and of little value, such
 ' a suspicion could never have occurred to them.
 ' Else how is it, that no one has ever ventured
 ' to utter a similar suspicion concerning the dig-

' nity of angels, or to say, that the human soul
 ' is too proud to take possession of that dis-
 ' tinction? It is, because we entertain high
 ' notions of those powers, which will not permit
 ' us to believe, that any honour can be regarded,
 ' as superior to theirs. I might therefore with
 ' a greater show of justice tax those, who bring
 ' this charge against me, with pride: for they
 ' could never have harboured such a sentiment
 ' concerning others, if they had not first enter-
 ' tained a mean opinion of the office themselves.

' If however they say, that I did this with
 ' an eye to my own glory, they bring forward
 ' arguments, that palpably defeat and confute
 ' themselves: for I do not see, how they could
 ' have invented a more plausible mode of rea-
 ' soning, if it had been their object to release
 ' me from the charge of vain glory. In fact,
 ' had I been possessed with this passion, I
 ' should rather have closed with their offer than
 ' evaded it: and for what reason? Because it
 ' would have done me much honour: for it
 ' would have led all men to entertain high and
 ' exalted notions of me, and have made me
 ' honorable and conspicuous, when they saw a

‘ person of my age, who had been but a short
 ‘ time withdrawn from worldly concerns, be-
 ‘ come on a sudden an object of such general
 ‘ admiration as to be preferred to those, who
 ‘ had expended their whole lives in such labours,
 ‘ and to obtain more votes than all of them,
 ‘ whereas now with a very few exceptions I am
 ‘ not known by name to the greater part of the
 ‘ church; and hence it is only a few, and not
 ‘ the whole body, that are acquainted with my
 ‘ having declined the proposal; and even of
 ‘ those few several (I imagine) are not apprised
 ‘ of the exact case, but suppose, either that I
 ‘ was never selected, or, that, being on further
 ‘ consideration thought unqualified, I was pur-
 ‘ posely passed over, and did not elude the
 ‘ appointment of my own accord.’

17
 Upon this Basil interposed—‘ But those,
 ‘ who know the fact, will regard you with
 ‘ admiration.’

‘ And yet’ (said I) ‘ you reported, that these
 ‘ very persons accuse me of being vain-glorious
 ‘ and proud. From whom then am I to expect
 ‘ praise? From the many? But they are not
 ‘ acquainted with the exact case. From the

‘ few then ? But with them also the tide has
 ‘ turned against me : for you came hither just
 ‘ now for no other purpose, but to learn, what
 ‘ apology you could make to them : and why is
 ‘ it, that I enter upon the discussion of their
 ‘ charges ? For, if they all knew the truth, they
 ‘ would have no reason to accuse me of con-
 ‘ tumacy, or vanity. Of this, if you will only
 ‘ wait a little, you shall soon be convinced ; and
 ‘ you will then perceive also, that not only those,
 ‘ if there be any, (for I do not believe it), who
 ‘ have this presumption, but those, who impute
 ‘ it to others, are in no slight peril. For though
 ‘ the priesthood is discharged upon Earth, it is
 ‘ ranked among heavenly ordinances, and with
 ‘ good reason ; for it was established neither by
 ‘ man, nor by angel, nor archangel, nor by any
 ‘ other created power, but by the comforter
 ‘ himself, who has entrusted men, yet dwelling
 ‘ in the flesh, with a ministry, like that of
 ‘ angels : for which reason the person, who is
 ‘ consecrated to this office, ought to be as pure,
 ‘ as if he stood in the heavens themselves, en-
 ‘ circled by those superior beings. For if even
 ‘ the institutions of the law were awful, and

' most impressive, such as the bells, the pome-
 ' granates, the stones, worn upon the breast
 ' and shoulders, the mitre, the crown, the robe,
 ' reaching to the feet, the golden fringe, the
 ' holy of holies, the great stillness of all in
 ' the temple, surely, when we examine the
 ' institutions of grace, we shall feel those
 ' awful and most impressive spectacles to
 ' have been of slight moment, and what
 ' was said of the law itself to be true also
 ' of its ordinances, that even that, which was
 ' made glorious, had no glory in this respect by
 ' reason of the glory, that excelleth :¹ for, when
 ' you see the Lord, sacrificed, and laid upon the
 ' altar, and the priest, standing, and praying
 ' over the sacrifice, and all the people empur-
 ' pled with his most precious blood, do you
 ' then fancy yourself among men, or continuing
 ' upon the earth ? Are you not instantly trans-
 ' ported into the heavens, so as, discarding every
 ' fleshly sentiment from your mind, to look
 ' around with naked soul and disembodied
 ' spirit on celestial objects ? O the wonderful
 ' philanthropy of God ! He, who sits above
 ' with the Father, is at that instant holden in

' the hands of every one, giving himself to
 ' those, who clasp and embrace him, as all may
 ' clearly see with the eyes of faith. Does
 ' this appear to you a thing, that men may
 ' despise, or that any one could be too proud to
 ' handle ?

' Shall I shew you the transcendant great-
 ' ness of this holy rite by another prodigy ?
 ' Paint then Elijah with the innumerable mul-
 ' tudes around him, and the sacrifice, lying on
 ' the stones, while all the people are waiting in
 ' silent suspense, and the prophet alone is pray-
 ' ing ! Then on a sudden behold the fire, cast
 ' down from Heaven upon the victim ! These
 ' things are great, and full of all astonishment.
 ' Pass next to the rites, which are per-
 ' formed now ! and you will see things, that are
 ' not only wonderful, but such as surpass all
 ' astonishment : for there stands the priest,
 ' bringing down not fire, but the holy ghost ;
 ' and he makes a long supplication, not that a
 ' flame from above may consume that, which
 ' lies before him, but that grace, descending
 ' upon the sacrifice, may through it kindle the
 ' soul of every one, and render it brighter than

‘ silver, tried in the furnace. Who therefore, but
 ‘ an idiot, who, but a madman, can despise this
 ‘ terrific rite? Are you not conscious, that no
 ‘ human soul can sustain that fire, which falls
 ‘ upon the sacrifice, but that all must utterly
 ‘ perish without abundant help from the grace
 ‘ of God?

‘ For certainly, whoever will consider, how
 ‘ great a privilege it is for a mere man, com-
 ‘ pounded of flesh and blood, to be permitted
 ‘ to draw near to that immaculate and blessed
 ‘ nature, cannot fail to see clearly, to how
 ‘ distinguished an honour priests are advanced
 ‘ by the grace of the spirit; for it is by them,
 ‘ that both these, and other rites, in no res-
 ‘ pect inferior to these, either as to their own
 ‘ dignity, or to our salvation, are performed;
 ‘ for although their abode and home is on
 ‘ Earth, they are entrusted with the manage-
 ‘ ment of things in Heaven, and receive an
 ‘ authority, such as God never granted either to
 ‘ angels or archangels; to whom it was never
 ‘ said—“ Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth,
 ‘ shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever
 ‘ ye shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed in

“Heaven.” For though even temporal rulers
 ‘ have authority to bind, their power reaches
 ‘ only to the body, whereas this bond pene-
 ‘ trates the very soul, and passes up into the
 ‘ heavens, where God ratifies the act of his
 ‘ priests, and the Lord confirms the decree of
 ‘ his servants. What indeed has he really
 ‘ given them, but the whole authority of Hea-
 ‘ ven? For—“Whosoever sins”—says he—
 “ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and,
 “whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.”
 ‘ What authority can be greater than this?
 ‘ The father hath committed all judgment unto
 ‘ the son. But I see it now again delegated
 ‘ by the son to the priests: for they are
 ‘ advanced to this office with as absolute a
 ‘ commission as if they had been already
 ‘ translated into the heavens, as if they were
 ‘ already exalted above human nature, and
 ‘ exempted from the dominion of our passions.
 ‘ Now, should a king grant to any of his sub-
 ‘ jects such a portion of his own dignity as to
 ‘ invest him with power to imprison and release
 ‘ again, whomsoever he would, such a person
 ‘ would be regarded by all men with awe and

‘ admiration : and yet he, who has received
 ‘ from God an authority as much greater than
 ‘ this as the heaven is greater than the earth,
 ‘ and the soul more precious than the body, is
 ‘ by some persons thought to have received an
 ‘ honour of so trifling a nature, that they can
 ‘ even conceive it possible for persons, entrusted
 ‘ with it, to despise the gift. Out upon such
 ‘ madness ! For it is direct madness to despise
 ‘ an office so important, without which it is
 ‘ impossible for us to obtain either salvation, or
 ‘ the blessings, which are promised : for, if,
 ‘ except a man be born again of water and of
 ‘ the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of
 ‘ God, and if he, who does not eat the flesh of
 ‘ the Lord and drink his blood, is rejected from
 ‘ eternal life, and if all these blessings are dis-
 ‘ pensed only by the holy hands of the priest,
 ‘ how can any one without their ministry either
 ‘ escape the fire of Hell, or obtain the crowns,
 ‘ which are laid up for us ? For these are
 ‘ they, who superintend our spiritual birth ;
 ‘ and are entrusted with the regeneration of
 ‘ baptism. By their help we put on Christ,
 ‘ are buried together with the son of God, and

‘ become members of that blessed head, so, that
 ‘ we may justly fear them more than kings, and
 ‘ honor them more than fathers : for, whereas
 ‘ the latter begat us of blood, and of the will
 ‘ of the flesh, the former are the authors of our
 ‘ birth from God, of the blessed regeneration,
 ‘ of the true liberty, and of the adoption of
 ‘ grace. The priests of the Jews had authority
 ‘ to cure the leprosy of the body, or rather not
 ‘ to cure it, but to pronounce upon those, who
 ‘ had been previously healed : and you know,
 ‘ how eagerly the office of priest was con-
 ‘ tested. But these priests have received an
 ‘ authority not merely to examine, but altoget-
 ‘ ther to relieve, not the mere leprosy of the
 ‘ body, but the impurity of the soul : for which
 ‘ reason the persons, who think meanly of this
 ‘ privilege, are more guilty, and worthy of a
 ‘ sorer punishment than even the followers of
 ‘ Dathan, who, though they laid claim to a dis-
 ‘ tinction, which did not belong to them, at
 ‘ least held it in high esteem, as they shewed
 ‘ indeed by the eagerness, with which they
 ‘ sought it, whereas these persons, although the
 ‘ office is now charged with higher duties and a

' great accession of dignity, venture upon an
 ' offence, opposite indeed in its nature, but
 ' much more heinous than theirs : for to desire
 ' an honour, which does not belong to us, is
 ' less disrespectful than to undervalue blessings
 ' of such magnitude and importance.
 ' Nay. Rather the latter offence is as much
 ' the greater of the two as there is difference
 ' between contempt and admiration. Who then
 ' can be so profligate as to despise these privileges?
 ' Surely none but a demoniac.

' To return however to the point, from which
 ' I digressed, God has given greater power to
 ' priests than he has to our natural parents, not
 ' only in inflicting chastisements, but also in
 ' conferring benefits, the difference between
 ' them being as great as between the present life
 ' and the future : for the latter bring us into
 ' this life, but the former introduce us to that,
 ' which is to come ; and, while our parents
 ' cannot protect us from natural death, or
 ' remove the attack of a disorder, priests have
 ' often by the application of a slight penance
 ' saved a distempered soul, that was on the
 ' point of perishing, and by their doctrine and

‘ admonition as well as by the aid of their
 ‘ prayers withholden others from defection ; for
 ‘ they have authority to remit our sins, not
 ‘ only, when they regenerate us, but even after
 ‘ that time. For—“ Is any sick among you ?”
 ‘ says one. “ Let him call for the elders of the
 ‘ church ! and let them pray over him, anoint-
 ‘ ing him with oil in the name of the Lord !
 ‘ and the prayer of faith shall save the sick,
 ‘ and the Lord shall raise him up ; and, if he
 ‘ have committed sins, they shall be forgiven
 ‘ him.” Again, natural parents cannot help
 ‘ their children, if they happen to offend any
 ‘ of the nobles and people in power. But
 ‘ priests have often pacified not merely rulers,
 ‘ or kings, but God himself, when he was
 ‘ offended with them. Will any one therefore
 ‘ presume after this to charge me with con-
 ‘ tumacy ? For I think, that all, who hear these
 ‘ truths, must be struck with such awe and
 ‘ reverence for this holy function, that they will
 ‘ no longer impute contumacy and presumption
 ‘ to those, who shrink from it, but to those, who
 ‘ voluntarily present themselves, as candidates,
 ‘ and are eager to obtain it : for, if the gover-

'nors of cities, when not remarkable for wisdom
 'and sagacity, ruin both their country and
 'themselves, what ability (think you?) ought
 'he to possess, both natural and supernatural,
 'if he would be preserved from error, whose
 'office it is to adorn the bride of Christ?'

'No one loved Christ more than Paul did.
 'No one evinced a greater zeal than he. No one
 'was honored with more abundant grace. Yet
 'with all these advantages he is still alarmed,
 'and trembles at the thought of this authority,
 'and of those, who are subject to it. "For I
 "fear," (says he) "lest by any means, as the
 "serpent beguiled Eve, so your minds should
 "be corrupted from the simplicity, that is in
 "Christ,"—and again—"I was with you in
 "fear, and in much trembling." This was the
 'man, who was caught up to the third Heaven,
 'and partook of the unspeakable words of God,
 'and underwent as many deaths as he lived
 'days after his conversion, the man, who would
 'not use the power, which was given him by
 'Christ, lest any of the believers should be
 'offended. If therefore he, who went beyond
 the commandments of Christ, and never sought

‘ his own interest, but that of his people, was
 ‘ yet so fearful as to be continually apprehen-
 ‘ sive of the greatness of this ministry, how
 ‘ then ought I to be affected, who have long
 ‘ studied my own comfort, and not only do not
 ‘ exceed the injunctions of Christ, but trans-
 ‘ gress them in various ways? “ Who is weak,”
 ‘ (says that apostle,) “ and I am not weak?
 ‘ “ Who is offended, and I burn not?” This is
 ‘ that disposition, with which the priest ought
 ‘ to enter upon his office, or rather not this only ;
 ‘ for this is little, and even nothing to what I
 ‘ am going to mention : and what is that? “ I
 ‘ “ could wish,” (says he,) “ that myself were
 ‘ “ accursed from Christ for my brethren, my
 ‘ “ kinsmen according to the flesh.” If there be
 ‘ any one, who can write this speech, any spirit,
 ‘ capable of making this prayer, he may be
 ‘ justly censured for declining the offer. But
 ‘ one, who is as far as I am from possessing such
 ‘ virtue, would incur censure not by shunning,
 ‘ but by accepting it.

‘ For suppose there were now an election
 ‘ instituted to the post of commander in chief,
 ‘ and the nobility were to drag a brasier, or

‘ cobbler, or some similar artisan forward, and
 ‘ resolve on committing the army to him!
 ‘ Surely it would be a praiseworthy act in him
 ‘ to run away, or do any thing, that might save
 ‘ him from such an unexpected calamity. If
 ‘ indeed it were enough to be simply called a
 ‘ pastor, and leave the duty to be managed,
 ‘ how it may, and there were no danger in the
 ‘ case, then there might be some ground to
 ‘ accuse me of vanity. But, if the person, who
 ‘ would undertake this duty, has need of much
 ‘ intelligence, and with his intelligence of much
 ‘ grace from God, much rectitude of manners,
 ‘ much purity of life, and more than human
 ‘ virtue, do not deem me unworthy of forgive-
 ‘ ness for having been unwilling to expose
 ‘ myself hastily to unnecessary ruin! For, if
 ‘ I were placed at the helm of a vessel of
 ‘ unusual size, furnished with rowers, and
 ‘ freighted with expensive wares, and were then
 ‘ ordered to cross the Ægean or Tuscan sea, I
 ‘ should leap overboard at the first word, and,
 ‘ if asked, why I did so, should reply—“ That
 ‘ “ I may not sink the vessel.” Indeed, when
 ‘ the risk is loss of money, and the danger

‘ reaches only to bodily death, no one finds fault
 ’ with those, who exercise circumspection and
 ‘ forethought. Why then, when the mariners
 ‘ are in danger of falling not into such a sea as
 ‘ this, but into an abyss of fire, and when the
 ‘ death, which awaits them, is not that, which
 ‘ separates the soul from the body, but that,
 ’ which consigns it together with the body to
 ‘ everlasting punishment, are you angry with
 ’ me, and ready to hate me for not having blindly
 ‘ involved myself in so awful a catastrophe? I
 ‘ beseech you, be not so rash! I know my own
 ‘ soul. I know its impotence and weakness. I
 ’ know also the formidable nature of the under-
 ‘ taking, and the great difficulty of the work : for
 ’ there are more storms, besetting the soul of
 ‘ the priest, than there are winds, which harass
 ’ the sea.

‘ In the first place there is the dangerous
 ‘ rock of self-conceit, a rock more dreadful
 ‘ than that, in respect to which the poets
 ‘ feigned the portentous fable of the sirens.
 ‘ For there were many, who managed to sail by
 ‘ that rock, and escaped unhurt. But this I
 ‘ find to be so perilous, that even now, when no

' necessity drives me near it, I can hardly keep
 ' myself clear of the danger, whereas, if I were
 ' once clothed with this dignity, I should be
 ' delivered with my hands, as it were, tied
 ' behind me, to the monsters, which infest the
 ' rock, and would rend me every day : and
 ' what monsters are they ? Wrath, dejection,
 ' envy, strife, calumny, censoriousness, false-
 ' hood, hypocrisy, cunning, ill will towards
 ' those, who have done me no injury, satis-
 ' faction at the failings of fellow-ministers,
 ' grief at their success, love of praise, desire of
 ' honour, which is the most destructive of all
 ' to the soul, perversions of doctrine for the
 ' gratification of the hearers, base flatteries,
 ' ignoble compliances, contempt of the poor,
 ' adulation of the rich, ill-deserved praise, and
 ' unreasonable favour, alike injurious to those,
 ' who bestow, and to those, who receive it,
 ' a servile fear, which befits only the vilest of
 ' slaves, the ruin of confidence, great affectation
 ' of humility with nothing of the reality, a
 ' reluctance to reprove, or rather reproaches,
 ' directed undeservedly and to excess against the
 ' humble, while no one ventures even to open

' his lips against those, who are invested with
 ' power. For upon that rock all these monsters
 ' subsist, and even more than these; and to
 ' such slavery are all, who once come under
 ' their power, reduced, that they are driven to
 ' do many things, which it is not seemly to
 ' mention, at the dictation of women, who,
 ' though excluded by the divine law from this
 ' ministry, yet contrive to thrust themselves into
 ' it by force, and, being forbidden to act in per-
 ' son, manage every thing through the agency
 ' of others: by which means they become pos-
 ' sessed of such influence as to judge and
 ' depose any priests they will; and in short all
 ' things according to the proverb are turned
 ' upside down by their contrivance. The peo-
 ' ple; (and I wish it were only the men, but
 ' even that sex, which is not suffered to teach—
 ' nay, why do I say to teach? The blessed
 ' Paul did not even permit them to speak in the
 ' church,) take the lead of their superinten-
 ' dants; and I have heard one person acknow-
 ' ledge, that he had allowed them to use such
 ' freedom of speech as even to rebuke the
 ' rectors of churches, and chide them more
 ' severely than masters do their servants.

‘ Let it not be thought however, that I bring
 ‘ these charges against all ! For many there are,
 ‘ very many, who escape these snares, even
 ‘ more than have been inveigled into them.
 ‘ Still less would I attribute the blame of these
 ‘ evils to the priesthood. It is impossible I
 ‘ could be so senseless : for I should never
 ‘ think of imputing murder to steel, drunken-
 ‘ ness to wine, insolence to strength, or rashness
 ‘ to courage, since all persons in their senses
 ‘ charge the guilt on those, who make an im-
 ‘ proper use of the gifts, which God has be-
 ‘ stowed, and punish them accordingly. So
 ‘ too the priesthood may justly upbraid us for
 ‘ abusing it ; for it is not itself the cause of the
 ‘ evils, above enumerated. It is we, that have
 ‘ covered it with these stains by committing it
 ‘ to persons of no character, who readily accept
 ‘ the charge without examining their own souls
 ‘ beforehand, or looking to the importance of the
 ‘ duty : and hence, blinded, as they are, by ig-
 ‘ norance, they no sooner begin to act, than
 ‘ they lead the people, who are entrusted to
 ‘ their care, into innumerable errors.

‘ This was the state, to which I was myself

‘ on the very point of being reduced, had not
 ‘ God out of compassion to his church and to
 ‘ my soul delivered me at once from the
 ‘ danger. For in what (tell me!) do you think
 ‘ the excessive disorders, which prevail in
 ‘ churches, originate? For myself, I am per-
 ‘ suaded, that they arise from nothing, but
 ‘ this, that the elections of our spiritual direc-
 ‘ tors are made at hazard, and conducted upon
 ‘ no system. For it is necessary, that the head
 ‘ should be strong, that it may repress and
 ‘ dispose of the vile humours, which are sent
 ‘ up to it from the other parts of the body,
 ‘ because, if ever it is too weak to keep down
 ‘ these morbid attacks, it not only becomes en-
 ‘ feebled itself, but destroys with it the whole
 ‘ body. To obviate this evil in my case, God
 ‘ has still kept me in the lower rank, with the
 ‘ feet, in which I was born. For there are
 ‘ many qualities besides those just mentioned,
 ‘ Basil, very many, which every priest ought to
 ‘ possess, but of which I am destitute; and the
 ‘ chief of them is this. He ought to purify his
 ‘ soul from all ambitious fondness for the task he
 ‘ has undertaken: for, if he comes to it with

' eagerness, he adds fuel to the flame, that burns
 ' within him, and, being covetous of distinction,
 ' is tempted to submit to numberless acts of
 ' meanness, even to flatter, or to stoop to any
 ' low artifice, or to squander vast sums of
 ' money, rather than lose it again : for I do not
 ' allude to those contentions for preferment,
 ' which have filled churches with blood, and
 ' subverted whole states, lest I should obtain no
 ' credit for my assertions. But a priest ought
 ' to have that awe and respect for the pastoral
 ' office, which would lead him even to shun it
 ' at first, as a burden, and, when he is once en-
 ' gaged in it, to be ready, in case he should
 ' commit any fault, that requires to be purged
 ' by his suspension, not to wait for the decision
 ' of others, but voluntarily to abdicate his office,
 ' that he may thus obtain compassion from
 ' God. But to be immoderately eager for this
 ' dignity is to forego every plea in case of in-
 ' competency, and to inflame the wrath of God
 ' still more by every new provocation : for most
 ' serious indeed, most awfully serious are the
 ' consequences to be apprehended from so per-
 ' verse an ambition : and in saying this, I do not

‘ contradict saint Paul, but agree with him
 ‘ exactly. For what is it, that he says? “ If a
 ‘ man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth
 ‘ a good work,”—, whereas what I maintain is,
 ‘ that it is a dreadful ambition to desire not the
 ‘ work, but the authority and power, connected
 ‘ with it.

‘ This indeed is a desire, which in my judg-
 ‘ ment we ought to banish from the soul with
 ‘ all diligence, and not suffer ourselves to be
 ‘ infected with it in any degree, if we wish to
 ‘ keep our minds at liberty for going through
 ‘ the duties of the office without reserve: for he,
 ‘ who has no desire to make an ostentatious
 ‘ display of his authority, is under no appre-
 ‘ hension, lest he should be deprived of it, and
 ‘ can therefore exercise it with that freedom,
 ‘ which becomes a christian, whereas those,
 ‘ who are alarmed and distressed at the thought
 ‘ of being removed from it, endure a painful
 ‘ slavery, replete with many evils, and are
 ‘ often brought under a fatal necessity of offend-
 ‘ ing both men and God, a state of mind,
 ‘ which should never be suffered to exist: for
 ‘ as brave soldiers are seen not only to fight

' with ardour, but to fall with fortitude, so he,
 ' who enters upon this sacred office, should
 ' both discharge it, and be dismissed from it,
 ' like a christian, knowing, that by such a
 ' dismissal a crown may be obtained, equal to
 ' that, which attaches to the employment
 ' itself: for, if submitted to in order to avoid
 ' any act of meanness, which would be
 ' unbecoming, or unworthy of that dignity, it
 ' will bring punishment upon those, who have
 ' unjustly deprived him, and a still greater reward
 ' upon himself. For—"Blessed"—says he—
 "are ye, when men shall revile you, and per-
 "secute you, and say all manner of evil against
 "you falsely for my sake. Rejoice, and be
 "exceeding glad! For great is your reward
 "in Heaven." This is the case, when any
 ' one is ejected by his fellows either out
 ' of envy towards him, or from complaisance
 ' to others, or from ill will, or through any
 ' other sinister motive. Should it happen how-
 ' ever, that he meets with this indignity from
 ' enemies, I think no language can be neces-
 ' sary to shew, what advantage they heap
 ' upon him by their own depravity. He ought

‘ therefore to be most accurate in his self-
 ‘ examination, lest a single spark of this ambi-
 ‘ tion should be left, burning imperceptibly,
 ‘ within him : for it is well for those, who have
 ‘ once purged themselves from this passion,
 ‘ if they can continue to escape from it, after
 ‘ being advanced to this dignity. But, if any
 ‘ one has harboured this fatal and savage fiend
 ‘ within him, before he comes to the office, it
 ‘ cannot be told, into how fierce a fire he will
 ‘ plunge himself after his entrance upon it.

‘ Now I (and do not think, that I have any
 ‘ wish to say what is untrue through modesty !)
 ‘ possess a vast share of this ambition ; which,
 ‘ added to other considerations, was no slight
 ‘ cause of my alarm, and occasion of my flight.
 ‘ For as persons in love find the torment of
 ‘ their passion grow more intense in company
 ‘ with the object of their affections, but are
 ‘ cured of their folly, when they are at a dis-
 ‘ tance, by being removed from the cause of it,
 ‘ so it is with those, who are ambitious of this
 ‘ dignity. When they are upon the point of
 ‘ attaining it, the disease becomes intolerable.
 ‘ But, when they cease to expect it, they lose

‘ the ambition together with the hope. This
 ‘ then is one consideration of no small weight,
 ‘ which, even alone and single, would be suffi-
 ‘ cient to deter me from accepting that dignity.

‘ But now another, not inferior to it, shall
 ‘ be added : and what is that ? A priest ought
 ‘ to be sober and clear-sighted, and to have a
 ‘ hundred eyes about him, because he lives
 ‘ not for himself alone, but for so vast a multi-
 ‘ tude, whereas you yourself, whose love for
 ‘ me would render you anxious to conceal my
 ‘ faults, must acknowledge, that I am indolent,
 ‘ and remiss, and scarcely attentive enough
 ‘ even to my own salvation : for you must not
 ‘ here mention my fasting, or watching, or lying
 ‘ on the ground, or any other exercise of disci-
 ‘ pline to the body : for you know, how much
 ‘ I have shrunk even from these ; which yet,
 ‘ though they had been observed with the
 ‘ utmost strictness, could not even then with
 ‘ my present indolence of character qualify me
 ‘ for so high an office, since, whatever benefit
 ‘ they may be calculated to afford to a recluse,
 ‘ confined to his own house, and having no
 ‘ concerns, but his own, to attend to, yet

‘ what supposeable advantage can they confer
 ‘ on a person, who is to distribute himself
 ‘ among a multitude, and to be liable to par-
 ‘ ticular anxieties for the advancement of every
 ‘ individual, over whom he presides, unless he
 ‘ have the additional protection of a strong and
 ‘ vigorous mind? And be not surprised, if
 ‘ with so much abstinence as I practise I yet
 ‘ look for some further proof of fortitude of
 ‘ soul! for we may perceive, that the con-
 ‘ tempt of food, and drink, and of a soft bed is
 ‘ a matter of no effort to many persons, espe-
 ‘ cially, if they have led a rustic life, and been
 ‘ brought up to these hardships from their
 ‘ infancy; nor yet is it felt, as an inconveni-
 ‘ ence, by many others, whose constitutions
 ‘ and habits have rendered the practice of these
 ‘ austerities easy and familiar. But to bear
 ‘ marked insult, and offensive language, to put
 ‘ up with the taunts of inferiors, whether
 ‘ merited or unmerited, and with the censures,
 ‘ that are passed without either reason or con-
 ‘ sideration both by clergy and laity, is the
 ‘ privilege not of many, but of one perhaps or
 ‘ two, while there are too many, who on these

‘ occasions have so little command over them-
 ‘ selves, that they are rendered more outrageous
 ‘ than the most savage animals. Now these men
 ‘ above all others we would exclude from even
 ‘ the outworks of the sacred office. For, though
 ‘ the ruler of a church should be neither addicted
 ‘ to fasting, nor accustomed to walk without
 ‘ sandals, no mischief might result from it,
 ‘ whereas a haughty spirit entails great evils, not
 ‘ only on its possessor, but on all around him :
 ‘ neither again is there any divine menace against
 ‘ those, who do not practise such austerities ;
 ‘ but Hell and Hell-fire are threatened against
 ‘ those, who are angry without a cause. As
 ‘ therefore he, who is fond of vain glory, adds
 ‘ fuel to his passion, when he undertakes the
 ‘ government of a people, so he, who cannot
 ‘ control his own anger, when either by himself,
 ‘ or having intercourse with only a few others,
 ‘ but is easily carried away by it, will, when
 ‘ entrusted with the direction of a whole multi-
 ‘ tude, resemble some wild beast, who is goaded
 ‘ by numbers on every side, and will neither
 ‘ be able to continue in peace himself, nor
 ‘ to avoid bringing those, who are entrusted

‘ to him, into numberless perils : for nothing
 ‘ so much ruffles the transparent purity of the
 ‘ mind as violent and ungoverned wrath.
 ‘ Wrath (it has been said) destroys even the
 ‘ wise : for by passion the eye of the soul is
 ‘ so blinded, that it cannot distinguish friends
 ‘ from enemies, or the honorable from the
 ‘ vile, but, as happens in a night-combat,
 ‘ treats them all in the same manner, and,
 ‘ if it meets with any difficulty, encounters it
 ‘ readily, that it may secure for the soul the
 ‘ full enjoyment of its gratification : for the
 ‘ indulgence of wrath is a gratification, and
 ‘ takes a more violent hold of the mind than
 ‘ any other gratification, harassing and dis-
 ‘ turbing its tranquillity : for it easily swells
 ‘ a man with pride, or drives him into untimely
 ‘ quarrels, fills him with unreasonable jealou-
 ‘ sies, disposes him to commit offences incon-
 ‘ siderately and rashly, and compels him both
 ‘ to say and to do many other things of this
 ‘ nature, while his mind is agitated by the
 ‘ vehement blast, and has no place to steady
 ‘ itself, and collect its native force for resisting
 ‘ so powerful an assault.’

‘Nay’—said Basil. ‘I will not bear with
 ‘your pretences any longer: for who does not
 ‘know, how far you are from being infected
 ‘with this plague?’

‘Why then is it, my good sir,’ (I replied),
 ‘that you wish to bring me near the flame,
 ‘and to rouse the sleeping lion? Do you not
 ‘know, that I have not attained this exemp-
 ‘tion by my virtue, but by my love of peace?
 ‘It is much, if a person of my natural temper
 ‘can by remaining at home and seeing only
 ‘one or two friends keep himself from the
 ‘violence of the flame. But the task is much
 ‘more arduous for one, who is involved in the
 ‘vortex of these important engagements: for
 ‘such an one brings not himself only, but
 ‘many others with him to the precipice of
 ‘destruction, and renders them less intent
 ‘upon the practice of virtue: for it is a law of
 ‘nature, that the greater part of those, who
 ‘are under authority, should look to the man-
 ‘ners of those, who are set over them, and
 ‘form their own upon that pattern. How then
 ‘can one, who is violent himself, assuage the
 ‘intemperance of others? or what person in

‘ the multitude would ever take pains to be moderate, if he saw his governor passionate ?

‘ For it is impossible, utterly impossible, that the failings of priests should be concealed. Nay. Even the smallest of them will come to light, just as, while a wrestler stays at home, and contends with no one, he may remain unknown, though ever so incapable ; but, if once he strips for the combat, his incompetence must be detected. So too those, who live a private and retired life, have solitude, as a covering for their individual failings. But, when they come into public, they are compelled to put off the cloak of privacy, and to expose their souls naked to the assaults of others. As their virtues therefore benefit many by animating them to equal zeal, so their failings render them indolent in the practice of virtue, and lead them to engage in the performance of good works with indifference : for which reason it becomes necessary to let the beauty of the soul throw its rays all around, to cheer and illumine the souls of the beholders ; for the sins of ordinary men, being committed,

‘ as it were, in the dark, ruin those only, who
 ‘ commit them, while the misconduct of a
 ‘ distinguished and well-known character is
 ‘ a public evil, making those, who have been
 ‘ supine in the good cause, more indolent than
 ‘ before, and provoking those to pride, who
 ‘ were taking heed to their ways: and besides
 ‘ this the faults of common men, even if they
 ‘ come before the public, inflict no great wound,
 ‘ while those, who sit upon the pinnacle of
 ‘ honour, are not only visible to all men, but
 ‘ even their faults, though ever so small,
 ‘ appear in them of considerable magnitude:
 ‘ for the offence is always measured not by its
 ‘ own dimensions, but by the dignity of the
 ‘ offender; and it is therefore necessary for the
 ‘ priest to be equipped at all points, as with
 ‘ arms of adamant, and to look round on every
 ‘ side with constant zeal and exact circumspec-
 ‘ tion, lest the enemy, finding an exposed and
 ‘ unguarded part, should strike a mortal
 ‘ wound: for he is surrounded not only by
 ‘ declared enemies, but by many also, who,
 ‘ while they pretend friendship to him, are
 ‘ ready to combine with the others in wounding
 and destroying him.

‘ It is expedient therefore, that the souls of
 ‘ those, who are selected for this office, should
 ‘ be such as the grace of God formerly rendered
 ‘ the bodies of those saints, who stood in the
 ‘ furnace at Babylon : for of this fire the fuel
 ‘ does not consist of faggots and pitch and tow,
 ‘ but of much fiercer materials ; for it is not
 ‘ common fire, to which he is exposed ; but
 ‘ the all-devouring flame of envy surrounds him,
 ‘ being blown up from every quarter against
 ‘ him, and penetrating and searching out his
 ‘ life more narrowly than the fire did the bodies
 ‘ of those children. When therefore it meets
 ‘ with the least morsel of straw, it enfolds it
 ‘ quickly, and not only burns up the unsound
 ‘ part, but obscures with its smoke all the rest
 ‘ of the building, though it be even brighter than
 ‘ the sunbeams : for, so long as the life of a priest
 ‘ is in all points consistently upright, he is in-
 ‘ vulnerable to their attempts. But, if he should
 ‘ commit any oversight, as every man in tra-
 ‘ versing the uncertain sea of this life is sure
 ‘ to do, his rectitude in other points will avail
 ‘ him nothing in the attempt to escape from
 ‘ the tongues of his accusers. That single

' offence clouds all the rest, and the whole
 ' world is ready to judge him, not as one clothed
 ' with flesh, or partaking of human nature, but
 ' as an angel, and as one delivered from the
 ' remnant of infirmity : and as men both fear
 ' and flatter a king, while in power, because
 ' they are unable to supplant him, and yet on
 ' any reverse in his fortunes those, who before
 ' were his friends, lay aside that hypocritical
 ' semblance of respect, and at once become his
 ' opponents and enemies, and, having discovered
 ' all his weak points, are ready to depose him
 ' from his sovereignty, so is it also with
 ' the priest ; for those, who for a short time
 ' during the continuance of his authority paid
 ' him respect and obeisance, no sooner find the
 ' slightest handle given them, than they sud-
 ' denly prepare themselves to remove him, as
 ' not only a tyrant, but even worse than a
 ' tyrant : and just as the former suspects
 ' his own life-guards, so is the latter also in
 ' most danger from his neighbours and part-
 ' ners in the ministry, there being no other
 ' persons so likely to aspire to his station, or so
 ' intimately acquainted with his character ; for

‘ they are upon the spot, ready to observe be-
 ‘ fore others any error, as soon as it is com-
 ‘ mitted, and able, even if they should calum-
 ‘ niate him, to procure credit to the calumny.
 ‘ By then exaggerating every failing they over-
 ‘ power the object of their accusation, reversing
 ‘ by their conduct the saying of the apostle,
 ‘ so, that, whether one member suffer, all
 ‘ the members rejoice with it, or one member
 ‘ be honored, all the members suffer with it,
 ‘ unless he be so strong in his religious profes-
 ‘ sion as to make an adequate stand against
 ‘ them all.

‘ Is it therefore to such a contest, that you
 ‘ would send me ? And do you imagine, that
 ‘ my soul will be sufficiently furnished for a
 ‘ warfare so extensive and diversified ? How
 ‘ then, and by whom have I been instructed
 ‘ for the war ? For, if God has revealed this
 ‘ qualification of mine to you, shew me the
 ‘ oracle ! and I obey it. But, if you have no
 ‘ such authority, but give your vote from the
 ‘ impulse of human judgment, do not any longer
 ‘ suffer yourself to be deceived ! For in my
 ‘ own concerns you ought to trust me rather

‘ than others, since no man knoweth the things
 ‘ of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in
 ‘ him. For I presume I have satisfied you by
 ‘ the observations I have just made, even if I
 ‘ had failed to do it before, that, had I accepted
 ‘ this appointment, I should have made myself
 ‘ ridiculous, and returned afterwards with much
 ‘ discomfiture to the state of life, in which I now
 ‘ am : for not only the envy of others, but, what
 ‘ is much more dangerous than envy, the too
 ‘ common ambition, which is entertained, for
 ‘ this rank in the church, generally arms the
 ‘ majority against every one, who is raised to
 ‘ it ; and as unnatural children grudge the old
 ‘ age of their parents, so also some of these
 ‘ persons, when they see the priesthood continue
 ‘ long in the hands of one person, though the
 ‘ impiety of the action would restrain them
 ‘ from killing him, are eager to depose him,
 ‘ every one being ambitious to succeed him, and
 ‘ each expecting the office to fall to himself.

‘ Shall I bring before you another scene in
 ‘ this warfare, which is full of innumerable dan-
 ‘ gers ? Go now, and take a view of the public
 ‘ festivals, during which it is customary for

' the ecclesiastical elections to be made ! and
 ' you will see the priest, assailed by as many
 ' accusations as there are persons, subject to
 ' his government. For then all, who have a
 ' share in bestowing this honour, are divided
 ' into many parties ; and you may see the
 ' council of elders unable to come to an agree-
 ' ment either among themselves or with the
 ' bishop, who presides over them, concerning
 ' the person, who ought to be preferred, but
 ' standing aloof from each other, while one
 ' chooses this man, and another that ; the rea-
 ' son of which is, that they do not all of them
 ' look to the only criterion, which they ought
 ' to regard, the virtue of the soul, but allow
 ' this honour to be determined by other consi-
 ' derations ; as for instance one man says—" Let
 ' him be admitted, because he is of a noble fa-
 ' mily ! "—another—" Because he is possessed
 ' of much wealth, and has no need to be main-
 ' tained out of the revenues of the church ! "—
 ' a third—" Because he has deserted from the
 ' opposite party ! "—; and some are eager to
 ' give the highest honour to their intimate
 ' friend, some to their relation, some to any one,

' who will flatter them more than others ; and
 ' no one looks to the person, who is fit for
 ' it, nor thinks of inquiring into the qualities of
 ' the soul. I on the contrary am so far from
 ' thinking these reasons worthy of regard, in
 ' estimating pretensions to the priesthood, that
 ' even though a particular individual should
 ' have acquired a truly religious character, a
 ' thing of no small consequence for the due
 ' discharge of the duties of that office, I could
 ' not on that account venture to appoint him
 ' immediately, unless with his religion he also
 ' possessed much intelligence : for I recollect,
 ' that many, who have shut themselves up
 ' all their lives, and wasted themselves away
 ' with many fastings, obtained, so long as they
 ' could live alone, and attend only to their
 ' own concerns, the approbation of God, and
 ' devoted no small portion of each day to
 ' sacred meditation. But, when they came into
 ' public, and were required to correct the folly
 ' of the multitude, some of them were alto-
 ' gether unequal to the task, and others, who
 ' could not relinquish their employment, forgot
 ' their former exactness, and did the greatest

' mischief to themselves without being of any
 ' service whatever to others. Nay. Even if
 ' there were a candidate, who had spent all his
 ' life in the lowest rank of the ministry, and
 ' had come to extreme old age, I would not
 ' through reverence for his years promote even
 ' such an one inconsiderately to the highest
 ' order: for what, if after that age he should
 ' remain unqualified? And I say this not from
 ' any desire to dishonor hoary hairs, or to
 ' enact a law for excluding altogether from this
 ' high function those, who come from a monas-
 ' tic society (for it has often happened, that
 ' persons from that order have been an orna-
 ' ment to this dignity), but because I am
 ' anxious to establish this maxim, that neither
 ' piety by itself, nor age is a sufficient test, to
 ' prove its possessor worthy of the priesthood,
 ' a fact, scarcely capable of being ascertained
 ' even by the aforesaid considerations. But
 ' other pleas have been admitted, still more ab-
 ' surd: for some are even taken into the order of
 ' the clergy, that they may not range themselves
 ' with an opposite party, others on account of
 ' their profligacy, lest in resentment for being

' slighted they should commit some grievous
 ' wrong. Can any thing be more improper than
 ' this, when wretches, teeming with unnumbered
 ' crimes, are courted for reasons, for which they
 ' ought to be punished, and even advanced
 ' to the priestly dignity for causes, which ought
 ' to restrain them from passing over the pave-
 ' ment of the church? Need we look further
 ' (I pray) for the cause of God's anger, when
 ' we commit concerns, so holy and so fearful, to
 ' wicked and worthless men, who will be sure
 ' to pollute them? For, if some men are en-
 ' trusted with an administration, for which
 ' they are utterly unfit, and others with a
 ' charge beyond their strength, they bring the
 ' church into a state of agitation, like that of
 ' the Euripus. I have formerly ridiculed other
 ' rulers for distributing their honours not from
 ' any regard to merit, but to wealth, and num-
 ' ber of years, and superiority of rank. But,
 ' when I learned, that the same incongruity has
 ' appeared in our own proceedings, I no longer
 ' considered the fact so portentous. For what
 ' wonder is it, if secular persons, who are both
 ' enamoured of popular applause, and influenced

‘ by the desire of wealth, commit such errors,
 ‘ when even those, who profess to be weaned
 ‘ from these pursuits, act no better than they,
 ‘ but with a heavenly prize to contend for, still,
 ‘ as if the object of their deliberation were
 ‘ acres of land, or matters of that nature, receive
 ‘ from the crowd any candidates at random,
 ‘ and set them over an affair, for which the only
 ‘ begotten son of God did not disdain both to
 ‘ quit his own glory, and become man, and take
 ‘ the form of a servant, and submit to spitting,
 ‘ and buffeting, and death, an ignominious
 ‘ death in the flesh? Nor yet do they stop even
 ‘ here, but proceed to other measures, yet more
 ‘ preposterous ; for not only do they nominate
 ‘ unworthy persons, but reject those, who are
 ‘ suitable. Thus, as if it were necessary to
 ‘ impair the safety of the church both ways, or
 ‘ as if the first offence were not sufficient to
 ‘ inflame the anger of God, they have added
 ‘ to it a second, no less dangerous than the
 ‘ other : for it seems to me not less monstrous
 ‘ to exclude the useful laborer than to intro-
 ‘ duce the unprofitable, a course, that appears
 ‘ to be adopted, in order, that the flock of

' Christ may not find comfort or rest from
 ' any quarter. Are not these practices then
 ' worthy of innumerable thunders, of a hell,
 ' more fierce than that, with which we are
 ' threatened? And yet he, who willeth not
 ' the death of a sinner so much, as that he
 ' should be converted, and live, tolerates and
 ' connives at such enormities : and (how must
 ' any one needs wonder at his kindness to us !
 ' how must he be astonished at his mercy !)
 ' those, who belong to Christ, ruin his flock
 ' even more than his adversaries and his
 ' enemies, while he from the abundance of
 ' his compassion still shews mercy, and invites
 ' us to repentance. Glory be to thee, O Lord !
 ' Glory to thee ! How great is the depth of
 ' thy love, how marvellous the riches of thy
 ' patience ! They, who from being vile and
 ' unprofitable have through thy name become
 ' precious and distinguished, make use of their
 ' privileges against the interest of their bene-
 ' factor. Nay. They presume to do what none
 ' ought to think of, and even profane thy holy
 ' services by driving out and removing thy
 ' zealous servants, that so the profligate may

‘ overturn every thing at their pleasure in the
 ‘ profoundest security, and in the plenitude of
 ‘ peace.

‘ Then as to the causes, which have led to
 ‘ this monstrous iniquity, if you choose to in-
 ‘ vestigate them, you will find them resemble
 ‘ the former : for they have one common root,
 ‘ and, as I may say, one parent, Envy, although
 ‘ certainly they are not of one form, but present
 ‘ different appearances. For one says—“ Let
 ‘ the individual proposed be rejected, because
 ‘ he is young !”—another—“ Because he can-
 ‘ not flatter !”—and a third—“ Because he has
 ‘ given umbrage to such an one !”—another
 ‘ again—“ Lest some one should be offended at
 ‘ seeing him approved, when the candidate,
 ‘ whom he himself recommends, is rejected !”—
 ‘ another—“ Because he is too benevolent and
 ‘ candid !”—another—“ Because he is feared
 ‘ by offenders !”—and another for various other
 ‘ such reasons : for they are never in want of
 ‘ excuses. Nay. They find it easy to con-
 ‘ strue even the abundance of a man’s posses-
 ‘ sions into a fault, if they have no other to
 ‘ adduce : and they have this further allegation

‘ to make, that it is not fit for any one to be
 ‘ advanced to this honour at once, but slowly
 ‘ and gradually : and they can invent as many
 ‘ other pleas as they choose.

‘ Here however I would fain ask—What
 ‘ then is the course to be pursued by a bishop,
 ‘ who has so many opposite tempests to contend
 ‘ with ? How shall he stand against so many
 ‘ waves ? How shall he parry all these attacks ?
 ‘ For, if he would form a just estimate of the
 ‘ proceedings, all these persons should be re-
 ‘ garded, as adversaries and enemies both to
 ‘ himself, and to those, who are chosen : for
 ‘ they do every thing in their power to thwart
 ‘ his wishes, introducing fresh parties every
 ‘ day, and raising numberless sneers at the
 ‘ persons, who are elected, till they either get
 ‘ them expelled, or procure their own friends to
 ‘ be introduced : and in short his case very
 ‘ closely resembles that of the master of a ship,
 ‘ who has pirates, sailing with him in the vessel,
 ‘ and every hour forming conspiracies against
 ‘ both him, and the ship’s crew, and the passen-
 ‘ gers. On the other hand, if he values their
 ‘ favour beyond his own safety, and is thus in-

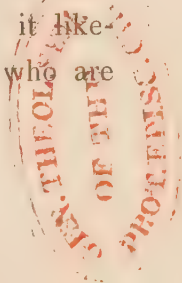
' duced to admit characters, whom he ought
 ' not, he will have God instead of his opponents
 ' for an enemy: than which condition what
 ' can be more perilous? and his course of action
 ' will become more difficult than before, be-
 ' cause the whole confederacy will act together,
 ' being strengthened by this new alliance:
 ' for as, when fierce winds encounter each other
 ' from opposite quarters, the sea, which was
 ' before quiet, becomes suddenly enraged, and
 ' foams, and destroys the mariners, so the
 ' calm of the church is agitated by tempests,
 ' and overrun with shipwrecks, when pernicious
 ' men are introduced into it. Consider there-
 ' fore, what ought to be the character of a per-
 ' son, who has to meet such an impending
 ' storm, and to manage and regulate such obsta-
 ' cles to measures of public utility! For he
 ' ought to be at once dignified and meek, and
 ' reverend and mild, and commanding and affa-
 ' ble, and inflexible and courteous, and humble
 ' and independent, and zealous and tranquil, if
 ' he would struggle against all these difficulties.
 ' He must exert his authority with firmness in
 ' advancing a proper person, though every one

' should resist him, and in rejecting one, who
 ' is unfit, though all recommend him ; and he
 ' must look to one thing only, the edification of
 ' the church, doing nothing from resentment or
 ' partiality. Do you now think, that I have
 ' declined this office lightly ?

' Nevertheless I have not yet enumerated all
 ' my reasons, but have still more to mention :
 ' and be not weary of listening to one, who is
 ' your true friend, and anxious to impress your
 ' mind upon the subject of your charge ! For
 ' these hints will not only help you to vindicate
 ' my conduct, but are conducive also to the
 ' right management of the work : for every one,
 ' who enters upon this course of life, ought first
 ' to make diligent inquiry into all branches of
 ' the ministerial office, before he engages in it :
 ' and why should he do so ? If for no other
 ' reason, at least for this, that he may not feel
 ' himself at a loss, when these impediments to
 ' his usefulness occur, a perplexity, which cannot
 ' befall one, who has taken a clear view of
 ' things, before they arise. Shall I there-
 ' fore first proceed to the department of
 ' directing the widows, or to that of superin-

‘ tending the virgins, or to the difficult task of
 ‘ the judicial administration ? For each of these
 ‘ occupations demands a different kind of la-
 ‘ bour, and a caution, even greater than the
 ‘ labour.

‘ To begin then with what appears to be the
 ‘ simplest duty, it would seem in the first place,
 ‘ that the care of the widows could occasion no
 ‘ other anxiety to those, who undertake it, but
 ‘ that of expending the money. This however
 ‘ is not the case : for even in this business
 ‘ much discrimination is necessary, whenever
 ‘ any one is to be taken into the number, there
 ‘ being no end to the mischiefs, which result
 ‘ from choosing and admitting them at random ;
 ‘ for some widows, who have been so elected,
 ‘ have been convicted of ruining families, dis-
 ‘ solving marriages, and behaving unseemly,
 ‘ often in thefts, in frequenting public houses,
 ‘ and other practices, equally offensive. But
 ‘ for such women to be maintained out of the
 ‘ revenues of the church is a state of things,
 ‘ that must provoke divine punishment, and the
 ‘ severest reprehension of men ; and it like-
 ‘ wise indisposes many to do good, who are



‘ otherwise willing. For who would choose to
 ‘ expend the wealth, which he is required to
 ‘ give to Christ, on those, who blaspheme his
 ‘ name? It is therefore expedient, that a close
 ‘ and accurate investigation should take place,
 ‘ not only, that such widows as have been men-
 ‘ tioned, but such as are able to provide for
 ‘ themselves, may be prevented from wasting
 ‘ the provision of those, who cannot : and after
 ‘ this investigation another subject of solicitude,
 ‘ by no means of slight importance, remains,
 ‘ that their sustenance may flow to them freely,
 ‘ as from a fountain, and never fail : for involun-
 ‘ tary poverty is an evil, that refuses comfort,
 ‘ and vents itself in complaints and ingratitude ;
 ‘ and great diligence is necessary, to stop the
 ‘ mouths of those, who are under its influence,
 ‘ by taking away from them all occasion of
 ‘ cavil. If therefore there be any one, who is
 ‘ observed to have overcome the desire of riches,
 ‘ he is immediately pronounced by many with-
 ‘ out further inquiry to be qualified for this
 ‘ office, whereas I, who do indeed think this
 ‘ species of magnanimity the first requisite,
 ‘ since without it the priest would injure instead

‘ of directing, and prove a wolf rather than a
 ‘ shepherd, do not yet regard it, as a sufficient
 ‘ criterion, but judge, that we ought also to
 ‘ inquire, whether he has another qualification
 ‘ together with this, namely patience, which is
 ‘ productive of all human blessings, and wafts
 ‘ the soul, as it were, into the haven of peace:
 ‘ for the class of widows through poverty,
 ‘ and age, and sex, are addicted to what I must
 ‘ needs call, to use a favorable name for it, an
 ‘ unlimited freedom of speech. They are unsea-
 ‘ sonably clamorous. They bring accusations
 ‘ without reason, complain of that, which they
 ‘ ought to accept with thankfulness, and reject
 ‘ what they ought to approve ; all which their
 ‘ superintendant must bear with dignity, and
 ‘ not be vexed by their ill-timed interruptions
 ‘ and unreasonable complaints : for their suffer-
 ‘ ings deserve pity, not insult ; and it would
 ‘ argue the height of cruelty to become acces-
 ‘ sary to their misfortunes, and to add the pain
 ‘ of contempt to that of poverty. For this rea-
 ‘ son a wise man, who well understood the cove-
 ‘ tousness and arrogance of our nature, and
 ‘ knew the power of poverty to unman even the

‘ most generous soul, and prompt it to obtrude
 ‘ its wants with indecent pertinacity, being
 ‘ desirous to obviate the offence, which is usually
 ‘ taken at such demands, and to preserve the
 ‘ person, whose duty it is to assist the petitioners
 ‘ from being made an enemy by their repeated
 ‘ and provoking intreaties, exhorts him to be
 ‘ mild and easy of access to them, saying.—
 “ Let it not grieve thee to bow down thine ear
 “ to the poor, and give him a friendly answer
 “ with meekness!” And then instead of con-
 ‘ sidering the offence, which is sometimes
 ‘ taken at their importunity, (for why should he
 ‘ reason with the fallen?) he directs his
 ‘ discourse to one, who can bear with their weak-
 ‘ ness, and advises him to give them encou-
 ‘ ragement by the mildness of his countenance,
 ‘ and the meekness of his speech, before he
 ‘ offers his present : for though he should keep
 ‘ himself ever so clear of embezzling the
 ‘ widows’ fund, yet, if he load the widows
 ‘ themselves with every kind of reproach and
 ‘ insult, and behave roughly to them, he not
 ‘ only hinders the gift from lightening the de-
 ‘ jection, which their poverty naturally brings

' upon them, but even aggravates their mis-
 ' fortunes by his haughtiness : for though they
 ' may be stimulated by hunger to an unbecoming
 ' and clamorous importunity, they are never-
 ' theless really in circumstances of distress, and
 ' it is by this they are driven through a dread of
 ' want to beg, and from begging to overstep the
 ' rules of propriety ; and again this forgetfulness
 ' of decorum exposes them to insulting treat-
 ' ment. This complication of depressing cir-
 ' cumstances clouds and weighs down their
 ' spirits : and hence it becomes the person, who
 ' superintends them, to practise such forbear-
 ' ance as may not only preserve him from in-
 ' creasing their uneasiness by provocation, but
 ' even enable him to remove the greater part of
 ' it by consolation : for as those, who are in-
 ' sulted, are too sensible of the insult to be gra-
 ' tified by pecuniary assistance, so a person, who
 ' is accosted with tenderness, and receives con-
 ' solation and relief together, is the more grati-
 ' fied, and feels the obligation doubled by the
 ' manner, in which it is bestowed : and this I
 ' say not on my own authority, but in concur-
 ' rence with the same writer, from whom I

‘ quoted the foregoing advice ; for he says—
 “ My son, blemish not thy good deeds, neither
 “ use uncomfortable words, when thou givest
 “ any thing ! Shall not the dew assuage the
 “ heat ? So is a word better than a gift. Lo !
 “ Is not a word better than a gift ? But both
 “ are with a gracious man.” Neither yet is
 ‘ it sufficient for the superintendant of the
 ‘ widows to be considerate and patient. He
 ‘ must be œconomical also ; or for want of this
 ‘ virtue the funds of the poor will be inadequate
 ‘ to their object. Some time since there was a
 ‘ person, who, being entrusted with this office,
 ‘ collected a large subscription, which, though
 ‘ he did not himself consume it, he yet failed to
 ‘ spend, except in a few instances, upon those,
 ‘ for whose use it was intended ; and thus he
 ‘ allowed the greater part of it to lie, buried,
 ‘ till at length a season of public danger trans-
 ‘ ferred the whole into the hands of the enemy.
 ‘ Considerable discretion therefore is needful in
 ‘ the disposal of the church-funds, to avoid the
 ‘ extremes of extravagance and meanness, that
 ‘ the contributions may be distributed speedily
 ‘ among those, who want them, and new trea-

‘ sures created for the church in the hearts of
 ‘ the contributors.

‘ Next in those, whose province it is to enter-
 ‘ tain strangers, and to visit the sick, what libe-
 ‘ rality, vigilance, and discretion are required !
 ‘ For the expence incurred in these duties can
 ‘ never be less, and must often be greater than
 ‘ in that, which has been mentioned. Whoever
 ‘ has the management of it, must distribute it
 ‘ with caution and prudence, so as to prevail
 ‘ upon the wealthy to part readily and ungrudg-
 ‘ ingly with their property, yet without hurting
 ‘ the feelings of the subscribers in his care to
 ‘ assist the needy. In this office too he will
 ‘ stand in need of still greater patience and
 ‘ zeal, because the sick are a sullen class, diffi-
 ‘ cult to please, and, unless great diligence and
 ‘ care are shewn them in every way, a very
 ‘ slight neglect is enough to give them great
 ‘ offence,

‘ But the task of superintending virgins is a
 ‘ subject of more apprehension than all the rest,
 ‘ inasmuch as they are a more precious trea-
 ‘ sure, and a class of greater dignity ; for there
 ‘ have been sometimes irregularly introduced

' into the society of these holy maidens a vast
 ' number of females, teeming with many
 ' vices : which occasions still greater sorrow ;
 ' for as it is a worse evil for a free virgin than
 ' for her slave to go astray, so also it is not the
 ' same offence in a virgin, and in a widow.
 ' For instance, it is a matter of slight conse-
 ' quence, when the latter trifle, and talk scandal,
 ' and flatter, and behave unseemly, and are
 ' seen every where, and gad about the market-
 ' place. But the virgin has trained herself
 ' to higher attainments. She emulates the
 ' highest philosophy. She professes to ex-
 ' hibit upon Earth the conduct of angels, and
 ' in this flesh to follow the steps of those
 ' unembodied spirits. It is therefore unfit, that
 ' this class of religionists should go abroad
 ' often, or without occasion ; nor is it becom-
 ' ing, that they should be engaged in hasty or
 ' frivolous conversation ; and as for scandal and
 ' flattery, the very name of these vices ought to
 ' be unknown among them. Hence it is neces-
 ' sary to keep a stricter watch, and to summon
 ' further assistance : for the enemy of holiness
 ' attacks them with more vehemence, and lays

‘ snares against them, that he may be ready to
 ‘ swallow them up, in case any one of them
 ‘ should decline, or fall : and there are always
 ‘ many men also at hand, to inveigle them to
 ‘ their ruin ; to which catalogue of evils must
 ‘ be added the violence of nature : for
 ‘ they have to contend in fact against two
 ‘ armies, one attacking them from without, the
 ‘ other harassing them from within ; whence
 ‘ their superintendant has much cause to fear,
 ‘ but more need of caution, and occasion for
 ‘ grief, should any unexpected misfortune occur,
 ‘ which is much to be deprecated. For, if a
 ‘ father is rendered sleepless by secret watch-
 ‘ fulness and concern for his daughter, when
 ‘ his only apprehension is, lest she should pass
 ‘ the flower of her age without having a family,
 ‘ or should be disliked, by her husband, what
 ‘ must be the feelings of one, whose concern is
 ‘ for none of these things, but for others, far more
 ‘ important ? For in this case it is not a man,
 ‘ who is disregarded, but Christ himself ; and
 ‘ barrenness in this case does not merely cause
 ‘ reproach, but endangers the destruction even of
 ‘ the soul : for it is said,—“ Every tree, which

“ bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down,
 “ and cast into the fire—”: and if one of the
 ‘ number should displease this husband, Christ,
 ‘ she cannot take a bill of divorcement, and
 ‘ depart, but suffers everlasting punishment, as
 ‘ an atonement for his wrath. Moreover a
 ‘ natural father has many helps, which render
 ‘ the government of his daughter easy to him :
 ‘ for both the mother, and the nurse, and a num-
 ‘ ber of maids, and the security of the house
 ‘ assist him in preserving his virgin ; for she is
 ‘ neither permitted to run continually into the
 ‘ market, nor, when she goes, is she liable to be
 ‘ seen by any one, that passes, the darkness of
 ‘ evening being as secure a veil as the cover of
 ‘ the house itself to one, who wishes not to be
 ‘ seen : besides all which, she is out of the reach
 ‘ of scandal, being never obliged to come into
 ‘ the company of men ; for no domestic arrange-
 ‘ ments, no quarrel with injurious neighbours,
 ‘ nor any thing else of that kind renders it ne-
 ‘ cessary for her to meet them, since her father
 ‘ is every thing to her, and she has no other
 ‘ concern, but this, to say and do nothing,
 ‘ which is unsuitable to the decorum of her be-

' haviour. But in this guardianship there are
 ' many causes, which render the paternal go-
 ' vernment difficult, or rather impossible : for
 ' the governor can neither keep his ward at
 ' home with him in his house, nor would it be
 ' decent, or even safe for them to live together in
 ' this manner, since, even if they should them-
 ' selves escape pollution, and maintain their
 ' sanctity unimpaired, they will feel as heavy a
 ' responsibility on account of the souls, whom
 ' they have offended, as if they had been guilty
 ' themselves. This then not being possible, it
 ' is not easy for him to distinguish the move-
 ' ments of her soul so as to restrain those, which
 ' are irregular, and exercise and improve those,
 ' which are right: nor again, can he conve-
 ' niently inquire into every reason for her quit-
 ' ting the house ; for her poverty and the want of
 ' a governess will not allow him to be very par-
 ' ticular in inspecting the propriety of her con-
 ' duct, inasmuch as, being forced to wait alto-
 ' gether upon herself, she has many pleas for
 ' going abroad, if there be any immodesty in
 ' her character, so, that if he would direct her
 ' to stay at home altogether, it becomes neces-

' sary to cut off these excuses by supplying her
 ' both with a sufficient maintenance, and also
 ' with a female attendant. It is further needful
 ' to exclude her from funerals and nightly solem-
 ' nities : for that crafty serpent knows—he well
 ' knows how to disseminate his poison even
 ' through the medium of good works. Indeed
 ' the virgin ought to be confined within walls,
 ' and not to go out of the house from one end
 ' of the year to the other, except on those few
 ' occasions, when inevitable and necessary rea-
 ' sons compel her.

' If it should be thought however, that the
 ' spiritual guardian has no business to meddle
 ' with any of these matters, it must be remem-
 ' bered, that the interests of every individual
 ' amongst them as well as their mutual accusa-
 ' tions are referred to him ; and it is better for
 ' him to undertake the whole labour, and so
 ' escape the charges, to which he is exposed on
 ' account of the sins of others, than to shrink
 ' from the duty, and then tremble at the ac-
 ' count, which he will be compelled to give, for
 ' the actions of others. Moreover by attending
 ' to these particulars himself he performs his

task with much ease, whereas, if he must convince the understandings of many assistants, before it can be undertaken, he does not procure so much relief by abstaining from the work himself, as he incurs trouble and difficulty from those, who thwart him, and oppose his decisions.

But it would be impossible for me to enumerate all the difficulties, which attend the management of the virgins. Even at the time of their enrolment they give no slight trouble to their superintendant. The business of deciding their claims is productive of many perplexities, and much uneasiness, and involves more difficulties than civil judges meet with; for it is both a laborious task to discover what is right, and difficult also to adhere to it, when discovered. Nor are trouble and difficulty the whole. There is considerable danger also: for some of the weaker members, when they have met with ill treatment, and not obtained redress, have in some instances concerning faith made shipwreck; for many persons, when they are injured, are no less offended with those, who refuse to

' assist them, than they are with those, who
 ' have wronged them, and will neither take the
 ' multiplicity of their concerns, nor the difficulty
 ' of the times, nor the extent of the priestly
 ' jurisdiction into their consideration, but are
 ' inflexible judges, and admit of no reply, but
 ' the removal of the evils complained of; and
 ' he, who cannot do this for them, though he
 ' should allege numberless excuses, will never
 ' escape their censure.

' Now too, that I am upon the subject of
 ' this office, let me advert to another source
 ' of complaints! For, if the pastor does not
 ' go every day round all the houses more sys-
 ' tematically than the idlers, who frequent the
 ' market-place, the offence, which is taken at
 ' the neglect, is inexpressible: for not only the
 ' sick, but the whole also wish to be visited,
 ' not from any feeling of piety, but in general,
 ' because they regard it, as an honour, and a
 ' distinction; and, if it should ever happen,
 ' that on some urgent occasion, concerning the
 ' common interest of the church, he visits some
 ' of the richer and more powerful persons oftener

‘ than usual, he immediately incurs a suspicion
 ‘ of flattery, and adulation.

‘ But why do I speak of these guardianships
 ‘ and trusts? Even from the accident of their
 ‘ accosting particular individuals so heavy a load
 ‘ of complaint is often thrown upon them,
 ‘ that they must needs sink under it, and be
 ‘ subject to dejection of spirits. Nay. Even
 ‘ their very looks are called in question: for
 ‘ people scan with much minuteness even their
 ‘ peculiarities of manner and language, critici-
 ‘ zing both the tone of their voice, and the
 ‘ expression of their countenance, and the
 ‘ measure of their laughter. For says some
 ‘ person,—“ He smiled on such an one with a
 ‘ look of kindness, and spoke to him aloud,
 ‘ but to me with less civility, and indeed with
 ‘ indifference”—; and, if among many, who
 ‘ are sitting together, he does not, when speak-
 ‘ ing, direct his eyes to each, this is regarded
 ‘ by many, as a slight. Who then, but a per-
 ‘ son of extraordinary energy can be prepared
 ‘ against so many accusers, either to escape ac-
 ‘ cusation, or, after being accused, to secure an
 ‘ acquittal? For it is most desirable to have no

‘ accusers at all. But, if that be impossible,
 ‘ the next object is to refute their charges :
 ‘ and, if this be no easy task, because there
 ‘ will always be some, who take delight in
 ‘ censuring him even without cause, then in the
 ‘ third place he must exert himself to resist that
 ‘ dejection of spirits, which their cavils will
 ‘ naturally occasion : for a man, who is accused
 ‘ justly, may bear the accusation without re-
 ‘ sentment, because, as Conscience is the bit-
 ‘ terest of all accusers, he, who has already
 ‘ been convicted by the severest judge, may
 ‘ well submit to the reproaches of milder cen-
 ‘ sors, whereas on the other hand, when a
 ‘ person, who is not conscious of any offence,
 ‘ is accused without reason, he is naturally pro-
 ‘ voked to resent the affront, and, unless he has
 ‘ previously made up his mind to bear with
 ‘ the follies of the multitude, is overcome with
 ‘ dejection ; for it is impossible, quite impossible
 ‘ for any one to be accused and condemned
 ‘ falsely without being grieved and hurt at
 ‘ such unreasonable usage.

‘ Why need I advert to the distress, occa-
 ‘ sioned by the necessity of removing any

' one from the communion of the church ?
 ' Indeed I wish this were an evil, which ended
 ' with the distress it occasions. But in fact
 ' the danger, which accompanies it, is of no
 ' trifling magnitude, since, if his punishment
 ' should exceed the occasion, there is reason
 ' to fear he may fall into the condition, de-
 ' scribed by St. Paul, and be swallowed up
 ' with overmuch sorrow. Even in this point
 ' therefore, the utmost exactness is necessary,
 ' lest what is prescribed for his benefit, should
 ' only aggravate his destruction ; in which case
 ' the physician, who opened the wound unskil-
 ' fully, must share the wrath, provoked by any
 ' sins, into which he may fall after so imperfect
 ' a cure. What severity of punishment there-
 ' fore must priests expect, when they will not
 ' only be called to account for offences, of
 ' which they have severally been guilty them-
 ' selves, but are also brought into extreme
 ' peril because of sins, committed by others !
 ' for, if we are afraid of the account we must
 ' render for our own private transgressions, if
 ' we are alarmed, lest we should not be able
 ' to obtain deliverance from that fire, what

‘ punishment is to be apprehended by one, who
 ‘ has to meet the trial on behalf of so many ?
 ‘ And as to the truth of this statement hear
 ‘ the blessed Paul, or rather Christ himself,
 ‘ speaking in his apostle, where he thus charges
 ‘ us—“ Obey them, that have the rule over
 “ you, and submit yourselves ! For they
 “ watch for your souls, as they, that must
 “ give account.”— ! Is there then little terror
 ‘ in this threat ? It cannot be pretended.
 ‘ But the several considerations I have ad-
 ‘ duced, taken together, may convince the
 ‘ most unwilling hearer, that I have not re-
 ‘ sorted to this concealment from contumacy
 ‘ or vanity, but only from fear for my own
 ‘ safety, and a due regard to the awful great-
 ‘ ness of the undertaking.’

BOOK THE FOURTH.

BASIL, upon hearing this, made a short pause, and then said, ‘ Had you indeed been eager
‘ for this honour, your fears would have had
‘ some foundation : for no one, who has once
‘ professed himself qualified to discharge the
‘ office, can plead ignorance, as an excuse for
‘ his errors, after he has been entrusted with it :
‘ for he has previously deprived himself of that
‘ apology by his own act in offering himself for the
‘ ministry, and entering upon it with eagerness ;
‘ and after thus coming to it with his own will
‘ and consent, he can no longer say—“ I com-
“ mitted such a fault unintentionally”—or—“ I
“ ruined such a person undesignedly.”—: for the
‘ obvious reply is—“ How then came you, if
‘ you were conscious of your ignorance, or how
‘ dared you, if you were not perfectly compe-
“ tent to the task, to intrude into it, and thus
“ engage yourself in an undertaking above your

“ strength ? Who compelled you ? Who dragged
 “ you by force, when you were striving to
 “ escape ? ” Now this answer can never be made
 ‘ to you, since even your own ingenuity can
 ‘ not charge you with any such error, it being
 ‘ manifest to all men, that you have shewn no
 ‘ solicitude, great or little, for the honour, but
 ‘ your advancement to it has originated with
 ‘ others ; and the same argument, which ren-
 ‘ ders the failings of the persons, just alluded to,
 ‘ inexcusable, furnishes you with abundant
 ‘ matter of apology.’

To this remark I, shaking my head, and smiling with surprise at his simplicity, answered,—
 ‘ I should be glad, my best of friends, if it
 ‘ were, as you say, not however, that I might
 ‘ be called to accept the office, which I have
 ‘ now refused ; for, even if my careless and
 ‘ unskilful management of the flock of Christ
 ‘ would expose me to no punishment, I should
 ‘ feel it to be worse than any punishment to
 ‘ be entrusted with a charge of such magni-
 ‘ tude, and then reward the confidence of my
 ‘ employer with ingratitude. Why then did I
 ‘ express a wish, that it had been, as you said ?

' In order, that those unhappy persons, who,
 ' though, as you allege on their behalf, they
 ' are forced into the ministry, and do wrong
 ' through ignorance, still in point of fact come
 ' to the office unworthily, might find a way to
 ' escape, and be enabled to avoid that un-
 ' quenchable fire, and outer darkness, and undy-
 ' ing worm, and the fate of being cut asunder,
 ' and destroyed with the hypocrites. But
 ' what is my opinion on these matters ? It is
 ' very different, altogether different from this :
 ' and, if you choose, I will give you my reasons.

' The first is, that the priestly office is in the
 ' sight of God of more value than a kingdom.
 ' Saul, the son of Kish, became king without
 ' shewing any eagerness for the office : for he
 ' was going in search of the asses ; and it was
 ' concerning them, that he applied to the pro-
 ' phet, when he spoke to him in reply of the
 ' kingdom. Neither did he even then covet it,
 ' although promised him by a prophet, but put
 ' it off, and declined it, saying—" Who am I ?
 ' " and what is my father's family ?" What
 ' then ! When he made a bad use of the honour,
 ' given him by God, could these words exempt

‘ him from the wrath of his benefactor and
 ‘ patron? And yet, when Samuel upbraided
 ‘ him, he might have pleaded—“ Did I aspire
 “ to the kingdom? Did I contend for this dig-
 “ nity? I was willing to live a private life in
 “ obscurity and repose, when you dragged me
 “ forth into this distinction. Had I continued
 “ in that humble station, I might easily have
 “ avoided these offences: for, had I still con-
 “ tinued, undistinguished and unknown, among
 “ the crowd, I should not have been sent upon
 “ this commission, nor would God have en-
 “ trusted to me the war against the Amalekites;
 “ and then I could not have been guilty of this
 “ sin.” But all these excuses on his behalf
 ‘ would have been weak, and not only weak,
 ‘ but perilous, and would have inflamed the
 ‘ wrath of God yet more: for it does not become
 ‘ one, who has been honored above his desert,
 ‘ to make the greatness of that honour a plea
 ‘ for offending. Rather he ought to find in the
 ‘ high distinction he has received from God new
 ‘ motives for amendment. If on the contrary
 ‘ he should fancy, that he has obtained a licence
 ‘ to sin by being advanced to a higher station,

‘ and dare to attribute the iniquities of his
 ‘ own conduct to the condescending goodness
 ‘ of God, which is what the ungodly, and
 ‘ all, who act without reflection, are prone to
 ‘ do, we at least ought not to imitate their
 ‘ folly, or to partake of their extravagance, but
 ‘ should be diligent on every occasion, and
 ‘ exert our faculties to the utmost, that we
 ‘ may keep our tongue and our thoughts pure:
 ‘ for even Eli, if I may now pass from the
 ‘ kingdom to the priesthood, which is the im-
 ‘ mediate subject of our discourse, was not
 ‘ eager to attain this dignity ; and yet what did
 ‘ that avail him, when he offended ? and why
 ‘ do I say to attain ? The office was not to be
 ‘ avoided, had he been ever so desirous of doing
 ‘ so, through the strictness of the law : for,
 ‘ being of the tribe of Levi, he was obliged to
 ‘ accept the employment, which devolved upon
 ‘ him from his ancestors : notwithstanding all
 ‘ which he was severely punished for the trans-
 ‘ gression of his sons. And was not the first high
 ‘ priest of the Jewish people, concerning whom
 ‘ so many charges were given by God to Moses,
 ‘ was not even he, because he could not singly

‘ withstand the importunity of so vast a multi-
 ‘ tude, within a little of suffering death, had
 ‘ not the intercession of his brother appeased
 ‘ the wrath of God? And now, that I have
 ‘ mentioned Moses, let me from his history
 ‘ likewise illustrate the truth of what I have
 ‘ advanced! For that blessed saint was so far
 ‘ from aspiring to the command of the Jews,
 ‘ that he declined it, when it was given him,
 ‘ and refused it, when God enjoined it upon
 ‘ him, and thereby provoked the being, who
 ‘ had appointed him to the office: and not only
 ‘ then, but even afterwards, when he was fixed
 ‘ in the government, he would gladly have died
 ‘ to be released from it; for—“If thou deal
 ‘ thus with me,”—says he—“kill me!” What
 ‘ then! When he offended at the waters of
 ‘ strife, did his former repugnance plead his
 ‘ excuse, and prevail with God to forgive him?
 ‘ If so, why was he excluded from the promised
 ‘ land? For this one fault only was that admi-
 ‘ rable man disabled from obtaining the same
 ‘ privilege as his people. After his many labours
 ‘ and distresses, after his protracted pilgrimage,
 ‘ after all his wars and trophies he died without

‘ reaching the land, for which all those toils
 ‘ were undergone, and after surmounting the
 ‘ evils of the sea did not enjoy the blessings of
 ‘ the haven. You see, that not only those,
 ‘ who aspire to an important station, but those
 ‘ also, who come to it through the solicitation of
 ‘ others, are deprived of all excuse for their
 ‘ errors : for, if they, who were appointed to the
 ‘ office by God after often declining it, were
 ‘ subjected to such severity, if nothing could
 ‘ screen either Aaron, or Eli from this danger,
 ‘ or even that blessed saint, prophet, hero, the
 ‘ meekest of all men upon the earth, who
 ‘ talked with God, as a friend, it will be of
 ‘ little avail for me, who am so far below his
 ‘ pitch of virtue, to plead, that I am conscious
 ‘ of never having sought the office, especially
 ‘ under the present management of our ordi-
 ‘ nations, which are in too many instances
 ‘ determined not by divine grace, but by human
 ‘ contention. God chose Judas, and enrolled
 ‘ him among his holy apostles, and committed
 ‘ that sacred dignity to him as well as to the
 ‘ others, and even entrusted him with a charge
 ‘ beyond the rest, the management of the funds.

‘ What then! When he abused both these
 ‘ trusts to an opposite purpose, when he not
 ‘ only betrayed the holy person, whom he was
 ‘ commissioned to preach, but squandered shame-
 ‘ fully what his duty required him to husband
 ‘ with œconomy, did he escape vengeance?
 ‘ No. He from these very considerations ren-
 ‘ dered his punishment more severe, and with
 ‘ great justice; for the favours, which God
 ‘ bestows upon us, ought not to be perverted
 ‘ to his dishonour, but employed in his service;
 ‘ and he, who should expect to elude the punish-
 ‘ ment, due to his faults, with the greater
 ‘ facility in consequence of his higher distinc-
 ‘ tions, would act nearly, as one of the unbe-
 ‘ lieving Jews might have done, if after hearing
 ‘ Jesus declare—“ If I had not come, and
 ‘ “ spoken unto them, they had not had sin”—
 ‘ and—“ If I had not done among them the
 ‘ “ works, which none other man did, they had
 ‘ “ not had sin”—, he should have upbraided
 ‘ his saviour and benefactor, saying to him—
 ‘ “ Why then did you come, and speak? Why
 ‘ “ did you do these works, to render our punish-
 ‘ “ ment more severe?” But this would be

‘ the language of madness, and indicate the
 ‘ greatest insanity : for the physician came, not
 ‘ to condemn, but to heal you, not to neglect
 ‘ you in your illness, but to deliver you wholly
 ‘ from your complaint. If you have yourself
 ‘ therefore voluntarily renounced his assistance,
 ‘ you must submit to a stricter sentence : for as,
 ‘ had you yielded to his treatment, you would
 ‘ have been set free from your former sins, so,
 ‘ since you disregarded him, when he was
 ‘ present, you will no longer be able to wash
 ‘ them away : which if you cannot do, you
 ‘ must not only suffer the penalty, due for your
 ‘ offences, but also for having on your part
 ‘ frustrated all the care, of which you have been
 ‘ the object.

‘ For this cause we shall not receive the
 ‘ same measure from God, after we have been
 ‘ placed in a situation of dignity, as that, to
 ‘ which we should have been subjected before,
 ‘ but to one much more severe : for he, who is
 ‘ not improved by benefits, deserves a heavier
 ‘ punishment. Since then this has been
 ‘ shewn to be a weak excuse, and not only
 ‘ incapable of protecting those, who use it,

‘ but calculated to betray them to further
 ‘ danger, you must furnish me with some better
 ‘ defence.’

‘ Of what kind ?’—said Basil. ‘ For I am
 ‘ no longer my own master. You have so
 ‘ alarmed and agitated me by these reasonings.’

‘ Do not,’—said I—‘ do not (I beg and intreat
 ‘ you) distress yourself in this manner ! For
 ‘ though I, who am weak, have no security,
 ‘ except in keeping out of the snare, you, who
 ‘ are strong, may, after receiving the grace of
 ‘ God, rest your hope of safety on doing nothing
 ‘ unworthy of the gift, or of the God, who gave
 ‘ it. For although the greatest punishment is
 ‘ due to those, who after having been raised
 ‘ to this dignity through their own contrivance
 ‘ have made an ill use of it, whether through
 ‘ indolence, or profligacy, or inexperience, yet
 ‘ are not those, who have made no endeavours
 ‘ to procure it, entitled for this reason to for-
 ‘ giveness, but are themselves also without
 ‘ excuse ; for, though thousands should invite
 ‘ and press them, it was their duty not to listen
 ‘ to them, but first to examine their own souls,
 ‘ and, when they have made full proof of them-

' selves, then to submit to the persons, who
 ' urge them. But now, although no one, except
 ' an architect, will engage to build a house, and
 ' no one, who is ignorant of medicine, can be
 ' prevailed on to write a prescription, (nay,
 ' though numbers should urge, and press him,
 ' he would decline it, and not be ashamed of
 ' the plea of ignorance,) yet he, who is to have
 ' so many souls entrusted to his care, will not
 ' examine himself first, but, though he should
 ' be the most unskilful of men, will accept the
 ' ministry, because such an one enjoins him,
 ' and another forces him, and lest a third should
 ' be displeased at his conduct : and then how
 ' can he escape from bringing both himself
 ' and them together into a misery, which they
 ' will not foresee ? For, whereas he might have
 ' been saved, as a single individual, he now
 ' ruins both himself and others. For from
 ' what quarter can he look for deliverance, or
 ' whence obtain forgiveness ?

' Who is there then, that can be expected to
 ' intreat for us ? They perhaps, who are now
 ' urging us forward. But first I would ask—By
 ' whom in that day will they be saved them-

‘ selves ? For they also will stand in need of
 ‘ intercessors, to deliver them from that fire.

‘ However, that you may not think I say this,
 ‘ merely to alarm you, and that my assertion is
 ‘ not supported by the real facts of the case,
 ‘ hear, what saint Paul says to the disciple,
 ‘ Timothy, his own, his beloved son ! “ Lay
 ‘ hands suddenly on no man, neither be parta-
 ‘ ker of other men’s sins !” You see, from what
 ‘ vengeance (for it is not only censure, that
 ‘ they incur on my account), I have screened
 ‘ those, who would persuade me to this under-
 ‘ taking : for as it is not a sufficient apology for
 ‘ the elected to plead—“ I did not come,
 ‘ self-called, to the office, but neither fore-
 ‘ saw their design, nor eluded it”—, so neither
 ‘ will it at all avail the electors to allege, that
 ‘ they did not know the individual they chose.
 ‘ Nay. The charge against them becomes so
 ‘ much the more serious, if they brought for-
 ‘ ward a person, whom they did not know : and
 ‘ thus the very excuse, which was urged in their
 ‘ defence, will aggravate their condemnation : for
 ‘ is it not most irrational, that, while those, who
 ‘ wish to purchase a slave, shew him to the phy-

' sician, and exact a warranty from the seller,
 ' and consult their neighbours, and after all this
 ' are not confident, but require a long time for
 ' trial, those, who are going to recommend a
 ' person for so momentous a trust, should give
 ' their testimony for his appointment without
 ' thought, and without inquiry, because he is
 ' approved by such an one, or in order to gratify
 ' this person, or disconcert another? Who then
 ' shall intercede for me on that day, when the
 ' very patrons, who ought to protect me, will
 ' themselves stand in need of protectors? For
 ' if it be incumbent on the governors of the
 ' church to make a strict scrutiny, before they
 ' ordain any one, much more does it become the
 ' person ordained to do so, because, however his
 ' electors may share with him in the penalty of
 ' those sins, which he may afterwards commit,
 ' he is not himself thereby exempted from all
 ' punishment, but will bear the heavier sentence
 ' of the two, unless indeed it appear, that
 ' they have acted from some earthly motive
 ' against their conscience: for, if this be plainly
 ' the case with them, and they have knowingly
 ' brought forward an unfit person, their punish-

‘ ment will be equal, or perhaps even greater
 ‘ than his, for having introduced an improper
 ‘ character : for whoever gives power to another
 ‘ to destroy the church, is the real author of all
 ‘ the crimes he may commit. Even however
 ‘ if he should not be chargeable with this guilt,
 ‘ but should be able to plead, that he was de-
 ‘ ceived by the general opinion, he cannot
 ‘ even still escape punishment altogether,
 ‘ though the penalty, to which he is subjected,
 ‘ may be somewhat less than that of the indi-
 ‘ vidual elected : and why less ? Because it is
 ‘ easy for the electors to be deceived into what
 ‘ they do by a false report. But the elected
 ‘ person cannot say—“ I did not know myself,”
 ‘ as others may say of him. Since therefore he
 ‘ will undergo a severer punishment than those,
 ‘ who persuaded him, it becomes him to be
 ‘ more exact and particular in examining him-
 ‘ self than they, that, even if they through
 ‘ ignorance should press him into the service, he
 ‘ may come forward, and shew them such rea-
 ‘ sons as would induce all, who were deceived
 ‘ in him, to desist from their persuasions. By
 ‘ thus proving himself unprepared for the trial

' he will escape the weight of such an under-
 ' taking. For why is it, that, when an expedi-
 ' tion, or some question of traffic, or agriculture,
 ' or any other secular affair is under delibera-
 ' tion, neither the husbandman will go to sea,
 ' nor the soldier manage a farm, nor the pilot
 ' command an army, though they be threat-
 ' ened with the most painful deaths? Manifestly,
 ' because each of them foresees the mischiefs,
 ' that would result from his inexperience. Shall
 ' we then in a case, where the risk is trifling,
 ' shall we there exercise so much precaution
 ' as not even to yield to compulsion, if it
 ' be attempted, and yet in the matter of the
 ' priesthood, where everlasting punishment is
 ' the reward of those, who intrude into it im-
 ' properly, expose ourselves heedlessly to such
 ' a danger as this, hoping to shelter ourselves
 ' under a plea of constraint? Our future judge
 ' will not tolerate such inconsistency: for,
 ' whereas we ought to obtain much greater cer-
 ' tainty in spiritual things than in fleshly,
 ' it appears now, that we are satisfied with a
 ' lower degree of knowledge. For tell me! If
 ' from fancying a man to be an architect, who

' is none, we should be led to give him a
 ' particular order, and he, in obedience to our
 ' direction, should take up the materials, pro-
 ' vided for the building, consume the wood,
 ' waste the stones, and build such a house as
 ' would fall down again immediately, would it be
 ' a sufficient excuse for his rashness, that he was
 ' urged by others, and did not come by his own
 ' suggestion ? Certainly not, and for the wisest
 ' and most solid reasons ; for, whoever urged
 ' him, he ought to have refused the employment.
 ' Shall then the punishment of a person, who
 ' wastes your timber and stones, be irrevocable ?
 ' and yet does the careless builder, who ruins
 ' souls, fancy, that he will be sufficiently
 ' screened by pleading the compulsion of others ?
 ' Would not this be extreme folly, even if
 ' we omit the consideration, that no one can
 ' compel another against his will ? Let it
 ' even be granted, that violence was used
 ' towards him, and plots laid against him, till
 ' he was actually taken ! Shall this exempt
 ' him from punishment ? Oh, let us not (I
 ' entreat you), let us not so deceive ourselves,
 ' or pretend to be ignorant of that, which

‘ must be evident to the merest child ! For
 ‘ this pretence of ignorance will not be able to
 ‘ avail us in our account. “ You did not your-
 ‘ self ” (you say) “ aspire to obtain this office,
 ‘ because you knew your own weakness. Well.
 ‘ You ought therefore under the influence of
 ‘ this persuasion, even when others invited you,
 ‘ to have declined it : or were you weak and
 ‘ unfit, when no one invited you ? and, when
 ‘ persons were found to raise you to this
 ‘ honour, did you suddenly become capable ? ”
 ‘ All this is a mere subterfuge, worthy of
 ‘ the severest punishment : for on this very
 ‘ account the **L**ord exhorts a man, who in-
 ‘ tends to build a tower, not to lay the foun-
 ‘ dation, before he has counted his means, that
 ‘ he may not give all, that pass by, continual
 ‘ occasion to mock him : and yet in that case the
 ‘ risk incurred is no more than laughter, whereas
 ‘ in this the penalty is unquenchable fire, and
 ‘ the worm, that dieth not, and the gnashing of
 ‘ teeth, and outer darkness, and to be cut asun-
 ‘ der, and ranked with the hypocrites. These
 ‘ consequences our accusers never anticipate ;
 ‘ or they would abstain from casting reproach

‘ upon one, who is unwilling to destroy himself
 ‘ for nothing.

‘ We are not now debating about the manage-
 ‘ ment of wheat, or barley, or of oxen, and sheep,
 ‘ or concerning other things of that sort, but
 ‘ concerning the very body of Jesus. For ac-
 ‘ cording to the blessed Paul the church of
 ‘ Christ is his body ; and it is the duty of those,
 ‘ to whose care it is committed, to bring it to
 ‘ a state of perfect health and beauty, to take
 ‘ especial care, that no blemish may impair
 ‘ its comeliness and grace, and in one word to
 ‘ render it, so far as human vigilance can con-
 ‘ tribute to such a result, worthy of that spot-
 ‘ less and blessed head, which rests upon it.
 ‘ For, if those, who wish to prepare their bodies
 ‘ for wrestling, are obliged to employ physici-
 ‘ ans and professors, and to observe a prescribed
 ‘ diet, besides constant practice, and infinite
 ‘ care (for the neglect of any trifle defeats the
 ‘ whole regimen), how shall they, who have this
 ‘ holy body to prescribe for, whose wrestling is
 ‘ not against men, but against the invisible
 ‘ powers, be able to keep it pure and undefiled,
 ‘ if they have not a virtue more than human,

' and unless they understand the regimen,
 ' adapted for every soul? Do you not know,
 ' that this sacred body is liable to more disorders,
 ' and exposed to more attacks than our natural
 ' body, that it is sooner injured, and more slowly
 ' healed?

' Moreover our natural physicians have in-
 ' vented various medicines, different kinds of
 ' instruments, and particular diets, proper for
 ' different patients. Sometimes also the air
 ' itself is found sufficient for the recovery of the
 ' sufferer; or else an interval of sleep relieves
 ' the physician from further trouble. But
 ' here we have no such expedient: for, what-
 ' ever offences may have been committed, one
 ' only method and course of treatment is to be
 ' adopted, instruction through the word. This
 ' is the right instrument, this the diet, the at-
 ' mosphere. This supplies the place of medi-
 ' cine, and of fire, and of the knife. Whether
 ' caustic, or amputation be necessary, this is
 ' what must be used; and without this all other
 ' applications are vain. With this we both
 ' raise the dejected soul, and compose the agi-
 ' tated spirit, and detach what is superfluous,

" and supply that, which is wanting, and per-
 ' form all other operations, which are conducive
 ' to the health of the soul. For the regulation
 ' of the life indeed the example of others may
 ' kindle a correspondent zeal. But, if the mind
 ' be infected with spurious doctrines, the word
 ' is then particularly needful, not only to pre-
 ' serve the church, but to repel its enemies. If
 ' there were any one indeed, who, being armed
 ' with the sword of the spirit, and possessing
 ' that shield of faith, which is able to work
 ' miracles, could stop the mouths of the wicked
 ' by wonders, he would want no assistance
 ' from the word; and yet even in his case the
 ' use of it would not be unserviceable, but very
 ' important, since even saint Paul made use of
 ' it, whose miracles are objects of universal
 ' admiration. So too another of that company
 ' exhorts us to be careful of this treasure, say-
 ' ing—" Be ready always to give an answer to
 " every man, that asketh you a reason of the
 " hope, that is in you!"—: and the whole body
 ' concurred in entrusting the management of
 ' the widows to Stephen and his companions
 ' for no other reason than this, that they might

‘ themselves have leisure for the ministry of the
 ‘ word. Still, if we were endued with the fa-
 ‘ culty of working signs, we should not require
 ‘ it so much. But now, since no trace of that
 ‘ faculty remains to us, while yet many and
 ‘ persevering enemies beset us on every side,
 ‘ we have need of this defence, to protect us
 ‘ from the arrows of our enemies, and enable
 ‘ us to reach them in return.

‘ We have therefore urgent motives for zeal,
 ‘ that the word of Christ may dwell in us
 ‘ richly : for our battle is with enemies not of
 ‘ one description, but of many ; neither do the
 ‘ different adversaries we contend with all
 ‘ employ the same weapons, or make their
 ‘ attack in a similar manner ; whence it is, that
 ‘ he, who enters the lists against them all, ought
 ‘ to be acquainted with all their artifices, and to
 ‘ be himself both archer, and slinger, and cen-
 ‘ turion, and tribune, and general, and private,
 ‘ and footsoldier, and horseman, and expert both
 ‘ in naval engagements, and in the art of attack-
 ‘ ing towns. For whereas in the military ser-
 ‘ vice every one has his duty assigned him,
 ‘ and it is sufficient, if he repel the assailants

‘ in one quarter, it is far otherwise here : for,
 ‘ unless he, who hopes to conquer, is acquainted
 ‘ with all the tactics of his art, the devil will
 ‘ easily introduce his pirates, and disperse the
 ‘ sheep on that side, which he finds neglected ;
 ‘ which he cannot do, when he sees the shep-
 ‘ herd apprised of all his devices, and well
 ‘ versed in all his stratagems : whence it be-
 ‘ comes necessary to be guarded well at all
 ‘ points : for so in regard to a city also, as long
 ‘ as it is fortified on every side, it laughs at its
 ‘ besiegers, and remains in perfect safety. But,
 ‘ when once a breach be made in the wall,
 ‘ though only of the size of a door, the fortifi-
 ‘ cation, though in every other part perfectly
 ‘ secure, is of no further service. In the same
 ‘ manner, when the city of God is fortified, not
 ‘ indeed with walls, but with the activity and
 ‘ forethought of the pastor, all the manœuvres
 ‘ of the enemy terminate in shame and derision,
 ‘ and those, who dwell in it, are unhurt. But,
 ‘ if it be weakened in any part, though the
 ‘ whole may not be overthrown, yet, if I may
 ‘ so express it, the whole is injured because of
 ‘ the unsoundness of a part : for what, though

‘ a person should contend ever so successfully
 ‘ against the Greeks, if the Jews disarm him ?
 ‘ or of what use will it be to have conquered
 ‘ them both, if nevertheless the Manichæans
 ‘ spoil him, and if, after he has overcome these
 ‘ also, the fatalists kill the sheep in the fold ?

‘ But why should I enumerate all the heresies
 ‘ of the devil ? For, while the shepherd is at
 ‘ a loss to guard the whole, the wolf can find
 ‘ means through any one of them to devour the
 ‘ greater number of the sheep. Again in worldly
 ‘ armies one may calculate the chances of defeat
 ‘ or victory from the number and position of the
 ‘ combatants. But here it is quite the reverse :
 ‘ for a contest with one party has often given
 ‘ victory to another, which at the beginning of
 ‘ the quarrel stood neuter ; and thus the inex-
 ‘ periented warrior, being pierced with his own
 ‘ sword, becomes a laughingstock to friends and
 ‘ enemies. Thus, to illustrate the matter by an
 ‘ example, Valentinus and Marcion and their
 ‘ successors, as well as all, who labor under the
 ‘ same delusion, exclude the law, given by God
 ‘ to Moses, from the catalogue of the inspired
 ‘ writings, while the Jews on the other hand

‘ honor it so highly, that, without regard to
 ‘ the time, they contend for the observance of
 ‘ the whole, contrary to the decree of God.
 ‘ But the church of God has avoided each ex-
 ‘ treme by taking a middle path : for it neither
 ‘ chooses to submit to its yoke, nor dares to
 ‘ calumniate it, but rather commends it after its
 ‘ expiration, because it was useful for a season.
 ‘ Whoever therefore would contend successfully
 ‘ against both these heresies, must understand
 ‘ the true state of the question : for, if in his
 ‘ desire to correct the unseasonable attachment
 ‘ of the Jews to their ancient law he should
 ‘ begin to impeach it unreasonably, he gives
 ‘ no slight handle to those heretics, who would
 ‘ explode it ; or, if in his eagerness to silence
 ‘ them he should exalt it above measure, and
 ‘ hold it up, as obligatory at the present day,
 ‘ he makes an opening for the clamours of the
 ‘ Jews. Again those, who are infected with
 ‘ the folly of Sabellius, or the madness of Arius,
 ‘ have both fallen from the sound faith through
 ‘ their want of moderation, insomuch, that al-
 ‘ though the name of christians is granted to
 ‘ them both, yet, if their doctrines be examined,

‘ it will be found, that the one are no better
 ‘ than Jews, from whom they differ only in
 ‘ name, and the other bear a close resemblance
 ‘ to the heresy of Paul of Samosata, and that
 ‘ both are far from the truth. Here conse-
 ‘ quently there is also much danger. The path
 ‘ is narrow and contracted, being overhung with
 ‘ precipices on both sides ; and he, who would
 ‘ avoid the one, has reason to apprehend, that
 ‘ he may be crushed by the other : for, should
 ‘ he preach one Godhead, Sabellius instantly
 ‘ wrests this doctrine to his own folly ; or
 ‘ again, if for the sake of perspicuity he should
 ‘ say, that the Father is one, the son a second,
 ‘ and the ^Holy ^Ghost a third, Arius besets him,
 ‘ distorting the distinction of persons into a
 ‘ diversity of essence. It is requisite, however,
 ‘ to avoid both the impious confusion of the first,
 ‘ and the insane division of the last by confessing
 ‘ the Godhead of the Father, the son, and the
 ‘ Holy Ghost to be one, and yet retaining a
 ‘ Trinity of persons : for by this method we
 ‘ shall be able to repel both the assailants.

‘ I could name many other connected here-
 ‘ sies, an unskilful attack of which would expose

‘ the assailant to a shameful repulse. Why
 ‘ should I allude to the disputes, which are
 ‘ carried on within the pale, and which are
 ‘ not less serious, but occasion even more
 ‘ uneasiness to the minister ? For some
 ‘ through officiousness are fond of meddling
 ‘ thoughtlessly with subjects, which can neither
 ‘ profit the learners, nor indeed are capable of
 ‘ being learned at all. Some again demand
 ‘ from God an account of his judgments, and
 ‘ thus pretend to fathom the great deep : for—
 “ Thy judgments,” say the scriptures, “ are a
 “ great deep.” And few are to be found, ear-
 ‘ nestly contending for faith and discipline,
 ‘ while the greater number, being inquisitive
 ‘ about these mysteries, love to pry curiously
 ‘ into what can never be discovered, while God
 ‘ is offended by the very search ; for, whenever
 ‘ we attempt to learn what he does not design
 ‘ us to know, we cannot succeed (for how
 ‘ should we without his consent ?), and shall
 ‘ incur only danger by the attempt. Yet not-
 ‘ withstanding this, to stop the mouths of such
 ‘ as probe these bottomless depths by authority
 ‘ would subject the person, who attempted it,

‘ to the charge of arrogance and folly, so, that
 ‘ great discretion is necessary for the pastor in
 ‘ this case also, if he hopes to reclaim men
 ‘ from pursuing unsuitable inquiries, and yet
 ‘ escape the aforesaid imputations. But for all
 ‘ these objects there is no other expedient, but
 ‘ that of preaching the word ; and, whenever
 ‘ the pastor is incompetent to this duty, the
 ‘ condition of the people, at least of those,
 ‘ who are weak and inquisitive, will be no
 ‘ better than that of a vessel, which is con-
 ‘ tinually tossed by a tempest. Hence it is
 ‘ incumbent upon the priest to avail himself
 ‘ of every expedient for acquiring this faculty.’

Upon this Basil said. ‘ Why then was not
 ‘ Paul solicitous to perfect himself in this art ?
 ‘ He does not even dissemble his poverty of
 ‘ diction, but openly confesses himself to be
 ‘ rude in speech, and that in an epistle to the
 ‘ Corinthians, who are admired for their elo-
 ‘ quence, and take great credit to themselves
 ‘ for their proficiency in it.’

‘ This is the very argument,’ (said I), ‘ which
 ‘ has proved ruinous to many, by rendering
 ‘ them too indolent to receive instruction in the

' truth : for, not being able to probe the bottom
 ' of the apostle's sentiment, or to understand
 ' the meaning of his words, they continue all
 ' their lives asleep and yawning, commending
 ' a state of rudeness, which is not only very
 ' different from that, which Paul avows, but
 ' one, to which he was a greater stranger than
 ' any other man under Heaven.

' But, to drop this question for the present,
 ' let us grant, that he was rude in the very
 ' sense they wish ! How does this apply to
 ' men of the present day ? He had a faculty,
 ' far superior to eloquence, and capable of
 ' greater effects : for by his mere presence
 ' without speaking he struck terror into dæ-
 ' mons, whereas all our present generation
 ' assembled could not with unnumbered prayers
 ' and tears do what the girdle of Paul did
 ' then. Paul by his prayers raised the dead,
 ' and performed such miracles as occasioned
 ' him to be thought a god by the heathen.
 ' He was even judged worthy to be caught up
 ' to the third heaven, and to hear words, which
 ' it is not lawful for a man to utter. But as
 ' for the ministers of the present day, I wish

‘ to say nothing censorious or unkind ; and
 ‘ indeed I speak of them now, not from any
 ‘ design to wound them, but from the impulse
 ‘ of astonishment at their presumption in com-
 ‘ paring themselves with such a man : for, to
 ‘ omit the miracles, if we consider only the
 ‘ history of that blessed man, and examine his
 ‘ angelic life, we shall find him in this view
 ‘ even more than by his miracles a victorious
 ‘ champion of Christ. For who can describe
 ‘ his zeal, his meekness, his continual dangers,
 ‘ his accumulated cares, his unintermitted
 ‘ anxieties for the church, his sympathy with
 ‘ the weak, his frequent tribulations, his con-
 ‘ stant persecutions, his daily deaths ? What
 ‘ part of the world, what continent, what sea
 ‘ has not been witness to his labours ? He was
 ‘ known to the desert, in which he underwent
 ‘ many dangers : for he sustained every species
 ‘ of attack, and won every kind of triumph,
 ‘ and never either rested from the combat, or
 ‘ failed of victory. But I have been insensibly
 ‘ led by recounting his praises to impair them :
 ‘ for his achievements, which indeed surpass
 ‘ all language, must certainly surpass mine as

' far as those, who are masters of eloquence,
 ' surpass me. Yet nevertheless, as that saint
 ' will judge me not by my success, but by my
 ' intention, I will not desist, till I have stated
 ' one thing, as much beyond all, that I have
 ' yet mentioned, as he is superior to all men.
 ' And what is that? After all these successes,
 ' after innumerable victories he prayed to be
 ' consigned to Hell, and given up to everlasting
 ' punishment, that the Jews, who had so often
 ' done all they could to stone and murder him,
 ' might be saved, and brought to Christ. Who
 ' ever felt such love for Christ as this was, if
 ' indeed it may be called love, and does not
 ' deserve some tenderer name? Shall we then
 ' still compare ourselves to him after all the
 ' grace, that he received from above, after all
 ' the virtue, which he exhibited from within?
 ' What can be more presumptuous?

' Now however, let me attempt to convince
 ' you, that he was not rude in the sense, which
 ' they imagine! For no person is called rude,
 ' merely because he is not versed in the charms
 ' of profane eloquence, but only, if he cannot
 ' contend for the doctrines of truth: and this

' is a just distinction. Now Paul did not say
 ' he was rude in both these senses, but only in
 ' one of them ; and, that he might make this
 ' plain, he defined his meaning with precision,
 ' saying, that he was rude in speech, but not
 ' in knowledge. If then I required the polish
 ' of Isocrates, the grandeur of Demosthenes,
 ' the dignity of Thucydides, and the sublimity
 ' of Plato, this testimony of Paul would apply ;
 ' instead of which I disregard all these quali-
 ' ties, and all the redundancies of heathen
 ' ornament, and pay no regard to diction, or
 ' pronunciation, and can be content, that a
 ' person should be poor in speech, that his
 ' composition should be simple, and plain. Only
 ' let him not be rude in knowledge, in the
 ' exactness of his doctrine ! Only let him not
 ' seek to cover his own indolence, by robbing
 ' that blessed man of the greatest of his bless-
 ' ings and the summit of his praise ! For tell
 ' me, by what means he confounded the Jews,
 ' which dwelt at Damascus, before he had
 ' begun his miracles ! How did he dispute
 ' against the Grecians ? Why was he sent
 ' away to Tarsus ? Because he prevailed migh-

' tily by his speech, and wrought on them so
 ' far, that they were even provoked to murder
 ' him, not being able to endure their defeat :
 ' for he had not then begun to work miracles,
 ' neither can it be said, that he was then ad-
 ' mired by the multitude for the fame of his
 ' exploits, or that his opponents were over-
 ' powered by his reputation ; for he prevailed
 ' by his preaching alone. Then how was it,
 ' that he contended and argued with the advo-
 ' cates of Jewish rites in Antioch ? and did not
 ' Dionysius, the Areopagite, a man of that most
 ' superstitious city, follow him with his wife
 ' in consequence of his preaching ? and what
 ' occasioned Eutychus to fall from the window ?
 ' Did it not happen, after he had been attend-
 ' ing to his word of instruction till the depth
 ' of night ? Then too in Ephesus, in Corinth,
 ' in Thessalonica, and in Rome itself, did he
 ' not consume whole days and nights succes-
 ' sively in expounding the scriptures ? Why
 ' should I mention his disputes with the Epicu-
 ' reans and Stoics ? For, if I should recount
 ' them, the course of my narrative would ex-
 ' tend to a great length. When therefore both

‘ before his miracles, and during the height of
 ‘ them he appears to have prevailed much by
 ‘ speaking, how shall any man venture to call
 ‘ him rude in that respect, being in fact ex-
 ‘ ceedingly admired by all men for his elo-
 ‘ quence? For on what account was it, that
 ‘ the Lycaonians suspected him to be Mercury?
 ‘ Their miracles (it is true) were the occasion
 ‘ of their being thought gods. But the name
 ‘ of Mercury in particular was attached to
 ‘ saint Paul, not on that account, but because
 ‘ of his eloquence. In what too did this
 ‘ blessed man transcend the other apostles?
 ‘ and why is he so much talked of by all
 ‘ men throughout the world? For what cause
 ‘ is he the most admired of them all not only
 ‘ by us, but by Jews, and Greeks? Was it not
 ‘ for the excellence of his epistles, by which
 ‘ he has benefited, and will continue to benefit
 ‘ not the faithful of that time only, but all
 ‘ those, who either have been faithful from that
 ‘ day to the present, or will ever be so till the
 ‘ final appearance of Christ? nor will he cease
 ‘ to benefit them so long as mankind shall
 ‘ continue; for his writings, like a wall of

‘ adamant, are a fortress to the churches all
 ‘ over the world, and he stands forth even now,
 ‘ as a bold chieftain, bringing into captivity
 ‘ every thought to the obedience of Christ, and
 ‘ casting down imaginations, and every high
 ‘ thing, that exalteth itself against the know-
 ‘ ledge of God. Now all these effects are
 ‘ produced by those admirable epistles, filled
 ‘ with divine wisdom, which he has left us.
 ‘ His writings moreover, are not only of use to
 ‘ subvert spurious doctrines, and defend the
 ‘ truth. They are also of no small advantage
 ‘ to us in teaching us how to live well : for the
 ‘ governors of the church use them even now,
 ‘ to form and educate that pure virgin, whom he
 ‘ was training for Christ, and to mature her
 ‘ spiritual beauty. It is by these also, that
 ‘ they remove the diseases, which beset her,
 ‘ and preserve her in her native health. Such
 ‘ medicines has this rude man left us, the value
 ‘ of which those, who are constantly using
 ‘ them, are able to appreciate : and hence it is
 ‘ manifest, that he paid great attention to this
 ‘ department of the apostolic office.

‘ Then too hear what he says in writing to his

‘disciple! “Give attendance to reading, to
 “exhortation, to doctrine!” And to this
 ‘advice he subjoins the benefit to be expected
 ‘from it, saying—“For in so doing thou shalt
 “both save thyself, and them, that hear thee”—:
 ‘and again he says—“The servant of the Lord
 “must not strive, but be gentle unto all men,
 “apt to teach, patient.” And further on he
 ‘adds—“But continue thou in the things, which
 “thou hast learned, and hast been assured of,
 “knowing, of whom thou hast learned them,
 “and that from a child thou hast known the
 “holy scriptures, which are able to make thee
 “wise unto salvation!” And yet further—
 “All scripture is given by inspiration of God,
 “and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for
 “correction, for instruction in righteousness,
 “that the man of God may be perfect.” Hear
 ‘too, what it is, that he sets before Titus,
 ‘where he is discoursing upon the ordination of
 ‘bishops! “For a bishop (says he), must hold
 “fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught,
 “that he may be able to convince the gain-
 “sayers.” How then shall one, who is rude,
 ‘as they contend, be able to convince, and to

‘ stop the mouths of gainsayers? Or what
 ‘ necessity is there to give attendance to read-
 ‘ ing, and to the scriptures, if this rudeness be
 ‘ allowable and right? Pretences these, and ex-
 ‘ cuses, mere covers for indolence and idleness.

‘ But it will be replied—“ These orders are
 “ directed to priests.” Well; and our argu-
 ‘ ment relates to priests. But, that you may
 ‘ be satisfied, that they refer to the laity also,
 ‘ hear, how he exhorts others in another epis-
 ‘ tle! “ Let the word of Christ dwell in you
 “ richly in all wisdom!”—and again—“ Let
 “ your speech be alway with grace, seasoned
 “ with salt, that ye may know, how ye ought
 “ to answer every man!”—: and that direction
 ‘ to be ready to give an answer is addressed to
 ‘ all men: and the apostle, writing to the
 ‘ Thessalonians, says—“ Edify one another,
 “ even as also ye do!”—, but, when he discourses
 ‘ about priests—“ Let the elders, that rule
 “ well, be counted worthy of double honour,
 “ especially they, who labor in the word and
 “ doctrine!” For the most perfect end of in-
 ‘ struction is then attained, when the teachers
 ‘ lead their disciples not only by their lives,

‘ but also by their instructions to adopt that
 ‘ happy life, which Christ has ordained : for
 ‘ actions alone are not sufficient to instruct
 ‘ them. Nor is this saying mine, but that of the
 ‘ Saviour himself: for—“Whosoever shall do,
 “ and teach them,” said he—“ the same shall be
 “ called great”—, whereas, if to do them were
 ‘ instruction enough, the second clause would
 ‘ have been superfluous, and it would have
 ‘ sufficed to say—“Whosoever shall do”—only ;
 ‘ instead of which by separating the two he
 ‘ shews, that doing is one duty, and teaching
 ‘ another, and that either of these without the
 ‘ other is insufficient for perfect edification.
 ‘ Do you forget what the chosen vessel of
 ‘ Christ says to the elders of the Ephesians ?
 “ Therefore watch, and remember, that by the
 “ space of three years I ceased not to warn
 “ every one night and day with tears !” Yet
 ‘ what need was there for tears, or verbal
 ‘ admonition, amidst the splendour of so apos-
 ‘ tolic a life ? That no doubt contributed much
 ‘ towards inducing them to perform the com-
 ‘ mandments, though even towards this object
 ‘ it could not do all, that is wanted. But, if

‘ ever there be a dispute about doctrines, and
 ‘ each disputant’s weapons must be taken from
 ‘ the same scriptures, what effect will the life
 ‘ of the teacher have then? What will be the
 ‘ benefit of his many toils, if after having
 ‘ endured them, he fall into heresy, and be cut
 ‘ off from the body of the church, which is a
 ‘ thing, that has happened to many within my
 ‘ knowledge? What advantage will he then
 ‘ derive from his patience? None at all, any
 ‘ more than he would from the soundness of his
 ‘ faith, when his life is depraved.

‘ For these reasons it is necessary for any
 ‘ one, whose duty it is to instruct others, to be
 ‘ well versed in such controversies. For even
 ‘ though he should himself be uninjured, and
 ‘ sustain no damage from his opponents, yet,
 ‘ if the multitude, who are placed under his
 ‘ guidance, should see their leader defeated,
 ‘ and unable to reply to the gainsayers, they
 ‘ will attribute the blame of his defeat not to
 ‘ his own insufficiency, but to the error of his
 ‘ doctrine: and thus through the inexperience
 ‘ of a single individual many people will be
 ‘ exposed to final destruction, or at least, if

‘ they should not actually go over to the enemy,
 ‘ will be brought to doubt on points, on which
 ‘ they might have been settled, and no longer
 ‘ be able to embrace with the same firm-
 ‘ ness truths, to which they had adhered before
 ‘ with a steady confidence, till, after their souls
 ‘ have been agitated by a violent tempest
 ‘ through their leader’s incompetency, the mis-
 ‘ chief ends in shipwreck. Then you too well
 ‘ know, to need any information from me, how
 ‘ tremendous a destruction, how devouring a
 ‘ flame is kindled for his devoted head on account
 ‘ of every one of those, who are lost. Is it there-
 ‘ fore to be imputed to me, as contumacy, or
 ‘ vanity, that I was not willing to be instru-
 ‘ mental to the destruction of such numbers,
 ‘ and that I was disinclined to lay up for myself
 ‘ more wrath than is already prepared for me?
 ‘ Who can make such a declaration? Surely
 ‘ no one, who is not given to censure, and
 ‘ desirous to find a theme for moralizing in the
 ‘ calamities of others.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

‘ It has been sufficiently shewn already, how
‘ expert the teacher ought to be in maintaining
‘ controversies for the truth. But I have now
‘ another subject to bring forward, one too,
‘ which has proved a source of innumerable
‘ perils : or rather, I would not say, that it
‘ has been the cause of them, so much as they
‘ are, who do not know how to make a
‘ proper use of it ; for the thing itself is condu-
‘ cive to salvation, and may even be productive
‘ of infinite blessings in the hands of serious and
‘ good men. What then is it ? The labour,
‘ which must be bestowed on discourses, which
‘ are to be delivered to the people in public.
‘ For in the first place, the greater number of
‘ hearers do not esteem those, who speak to
‘ them, as their teachers, but, passing out of
‘ the rank of disciples, usurp the office of spec-
‘ tators, such as are present in profane theatres ;

‘ and as the people there form themselves into
 “ parties, some attaching themselves to one
 ‘ actor, some to another, so here also they
 ‘ form parties, and some go to this preacher,
 “ some to that, listening to their discourses from
 ‘ partiality, or dislike. Nor is this the only
 ‘ mischief. There is another also, though of less
 ‘ consequence : for, if a teacher should happen
 ‘ to interweave in his discourses something,
 ‘ that had been written by others, he ex-
 ‘ poses himself to more reproach than if he had
 “ stolen money ; and often without being guilty
 “ of plagiarism, but only suspected of it, he
 “ undergoes the penalty, which belongs to such
 ‘ offences. But why did I say—“ Something,
 “ written by others”—? It is impossible for
 ‘ him always to confine himself to the use of his
 ‘ own compositions : for most men are accus-
 “ tomed to listen not for improvement, but for
 “ diversion, as if they were sitting, to criticize a
 ‘ player, or a musician ; and the skill of elo-
 ‘ quence, which we just now excluded, is much
 ‘ more peremptorily required from preachers
 ‘ than it is from professed rhetoricians, when
 “ they are called to oppose each other. Hence

‘ a generous spirit, and one, far surpassing the
 ‘ littleness of mine, is required, to correct the
 ‘ unruly and frivolous taste of the multitude,
 ‘ and to guide their attendance to a more pro-
 ‘ fitable use, that the people may be led by
 ‘ their teacher, and follow him, instead of his
 ‘ being directed by their inclinations. This
 ‘ advantage however it is perfectly impossible
 ‘ to attain without the help of these two auxi-
 ‘ liaries, contempt of praise, and skill in public
 ‘ speaking : for, if either of them should be
 ‘ wanting, the other is rendered of no use by
 ‘ the loss, since, though a minister should de-
 ‘ spise flattery, yet, if he do not bring with
 ‘ him a style of instruction, that is seasoned
 ‘ with grace and salt, he is so far from being a
 ‘ gainer by his magnanimity, that he is likely
 ‘ to be despised by the mass of his hearers ; or
 ‘ if, being provided with this requisite, he
 ‘ should be corrupted by the glory, consequent
 ‘ upon applause, then he does harm to himself
 ‘ and them by being tempted through his pas-
 ‘ sion for praise to speak in such a manner as
 ‘ rather to please than to instruct them ; and as
 ‘ the person, who is neither affected by their

' commendations, nor skilled in speaking, can
 ' neither gratify, nor to any considerable ex-
 ' tent benefit his people, because he has
 ' nothing to say to them, so any one, who is
 ' swayed by a desire of praise, will, though he
 ' have stores, capable of improving them, treat
 ' them rather with such viands as may be
 ' palatable for the sake of purchasing a noisy
 ' applause. The good pastor therefore must be
 ' fortified on both sides, that he may not be
 ' discomposed by either failing : for, when after
 ' rising, to deliver in public such statements as
 ' may affect persons, who are living negligently,
 ' he is presently daunted, and perplexed, and
 ' compelled to blush for his incompetency, the
 ' benefit of his discourse is gone instantly ;
 ' for those, who have been rebuked by him,
 ' being offended at his words, and unable to
 ' punish him in any other way, assail him
 ' with sneers at his failure, by which they hope
 ' to cover their own disgrace. Thus, if he
 ' would act, like a good charioteer, he must
 ' have a perfect command of both these qua-
 ' lities, that he may be able to use them both
 ' upon occasion ; for it is only, when he is him-

‘ self qualified to cope with all adversaries,
 ‘ that he will be able either to correct, or to
 ‘ spare those, who are under his care, with
 ‘ all the authority, which becomes him, and
 ‘ which, until he has reached this degree of
 ‘ virtue, it is not easy for him to exercise.

‘ The greatness of mind, however, which he
 ‘ ought to display, is not only to be shewn in
 ‘ the contempt of praise. It must be carried
 ‘ even further than this ; or the benefit, already
 ‘ attained, may afterwards be rendered unavail-
 ‘ ing. What else then is there, which he
 ‘ ought to despise ? Malignity and envy. Un-
 ‘ founded accusations indeed (for every public
 ‘ character is necessarily exposed to unprovoked
 ‘ censure) it becomes him neither to dread
 ‘ unreasonably, nor to neglect altogether. He
 ‘ ought rather, however groundless they may
 ‘ be, and though brought by contemptible cha-
 ‘ racters, to endeavor to silence them imme-
 ‘ diately : for an undisciplined multitude is pre-
 ‘ cisely that, which most swells a report, whether
 ‘ good, or evil, inasmuch as it hears, and tells
 ‘ again without examination, relates at once
 ‘ everything, that reaches its ears, and pays no

' regard to the truth. For this reason the
 ' opinion of the many ought not to be dis-
 ' regarded. On the contrary every injurious
 ' suspicion should be suppressed at its first
 ' origin by reasoning with those, who harbour
 ' it, though they should even be the most unrea-
 ' sonable of all men, and by leaving no ex-
 ' pedient untried for removing a discreditable
 ' rumour. But, if, when we have done all, our
 ' accusers are still unwilling to be persuaded,
 ' then we may properly despise them, since no
 ' one, who suffers himself to be depressed by
 ' such calumnies, can ever again do any thing,
 ' that is noble, or worthy of admiration, because
 ' dejection and continual anxieties unsettle and
 ' paralyse his mind, and reduce it to the last
 ' degree of weakness. Hence it becomes the
 ' duty of a priest to conduct himself towards
 ' his people, as a father does to very young
 ' children ; for as we are neither much affected
 ' by the extravagance, the blows, or the cries
 ' of infants, nor very much overjoyed by their
 ' laughter, so neither ought a priest to be elated
 ' with the praises of his hearers, or depressed
 ' by their censures, if they are pronounced

' unseasonably. Now this, my good friend, is
 ' a difficult—perhaps I might say, an impossi-
 ' ble task. It may indeed be expected, that
 ' every one, who is delighted with their appro-
 ' bation, will desire to enjoy it; and it is
 ' impossible, but that he, who desires to enjoy
 ' it, should be grieved, and dispirited, and
 ' tormented at the loss of it: for as those,
 ' who are proud of their riches, are distressed,
 ' if they fall into poverty, and those, who are
 ' used to a luxurious fare, cannot bear a plain
 ' diet, so the soul, which is captivated by praise,
 ' pines, as it were, with hunger, not only if
 ' it be censured wrongfully, but even if it
 ' be not constantly flattered, particularly after
 ' being early habituated to commendation,
 ' or if it hear encomiums bestowed upon
 ' others. But what trouble, and what dis-
 ' tress (do you imagine?) must be incurred
 ' by any one, who enters into the list of
 ' teachers with this ambitious frame of mind?
 ' The sea is never free from waves, nor can his
 ' soul be undisturbed by anxiety and uneasi-
 ' ness. For, even though he should possess a
 ' rich vein of eloquence, a faculty, found in

' few, still he is not exempt from continual
 ' vexation : for, as speaking is not a natural,
 ' but an acquired power, it deserts its posses-
 ' sor, though attained in the highest per-
 ' fection, if he do not keep it up by constant
 ' exercise and practice, so, that the more expert
 ' a man is in this art, the greater is the labour,
 ' which he must undergo. Indeed, if ever he
 ' fails, his failure is not measured by the same
 ' standard with that of others, but in proportion
 ' rather to the difference in their respective ac-
 ' quirements : for, while they are comparatively
 ' safe, he, if he do not always rise above the
 ' opinion, which is entertained of him, lays him-
 ' self open to numerous complaints from all par-
 ' ties. Besides inferior persons may obtain much
 ' praise for small achievements, whereas he, if
 ' he does not produce something perfectly ad-
 ' mirable and surprising, is not only deprived
 ' of commendation, but finds many to censure
 ' him ; for the hearers sit, to criticize not the
 ' things, that are said, but the reputation of
 ' the speakers, so, that the best preacher has
 ' occasion for the greatest industry, because he
 ' is not allowed to plead what others feel, the

‘ impossibility of accomplishing every thing,
 ‘ but, unless his discourses come fully up to the
 ‘ measure of other men’s expectations, becomes
 ‘ the object of numberless sneers and censures
 ‘ from his audience ; and no one considers in
 ‘ his behalf, that a temporary depression of
 ‘ spirits, or anxiety, or trouble, or perhaps some
 ‘ ill humour bedims the brightness of his in-
 ‘ tellect, and hinders his thoughts from being
 ‘ fully developed. No one recollects, that it is
 ‘ not possible for him, being a man, to be on
 ‘ all occasions the same, or to be successful in
 ‘ every attempt, but that he must be expected
 ‘ sometimes to fail, and that his public appear-
 ‘ ances must commonly fall short of his power.
 ‘ Men do not, as I said, voluntarily consider
 ‘ any of these things, but bring their charges,
 ‘ as if they were judging an angel. Yet on
 ‘ the other hand they readily disregard the suc-
 ‘ cessful attempts of their neighbours, however
 ‘ great or many. But, if a failure should
 ‘ happen on any occasion, even though it was
 ‘ a long time ago, they are both quick in hear-
 ‘ ing of it, and eager to seize upon it, and re-
 ‘ member it for ever : and this little and insig-

‘ nificant fault will often sully the lustre of
 ‘ many and noble performances.

‘ You perceive, my good friend, that a
 ‘ powerful speaker stands in need of greater
 ‘ diligence, and besides his diligence requires
 ‘ more patience than all the persons, whom I
 ‘ mentioned to you before: for he is continually
 ‘ attacked without reason or provocation by
 ‘ many assailants, who, having nothing to lay
 ‘ to his charge, except his high character with
 ‘ all men, yet take offence, and leave him to
 ‘ sustain their bitter malignity with composure,
 ‘ while they without even disguising their
 ‘ execrable hatred both reproach, and censure,
 ‘ and calumniate him in private, and give vent
 ‘ to their scurrility in public. Now the spirit,
 ‘ which once begins to fret, and feel irritation
 ‘ at these trials, must eventually wear itself
 ‘ out with vexation; for they are not satisfied
 ‘ with distressing him themselves, but endeavor
 ‘ to injure him through the medium of others;
 ‘ and often, having selected some incompetent
 ‘ preacher, they exalt him with praises, and
 ‘ admire him beyond his desert, which is done
 ‘ in some instances from sheer malice, in others

‘ from want of judgment, or an envious dispo-
 ‘ sition, with a view to ruin the credit of the
 ‘ man they dislike, not from a desire to extol
 ‘ his rival. But the person, whom I have now
 ‘ described, has not only to contend with these,
 ‘ but frequently also with the inexperience of
 ‘ all his hearers : for, as it is impossible, that
 ‘ the whole of any congregation should be
 ‘ made up of persons of consideration, but the
 ‘ majority of them must necessarily be inferior
 ‘ persons, while the rest, though they excel
 ‘ them in understanding, yet fall as far short
 ‘ of those, who are competent to pass judgment
 ‘ upon the discourses delivered, as the others
 ‘ fall beneath them, and only one or two are
 ‘ to be found there who are well qualified for
 ‘ the task, he will receive fewer encourage-
 ‘ ments, and must occasionally depart with-
 ‘ out any praise : and though indeed it is
 ‘ right for a minister to be duly prepared
 ‘ against such injustice, though he should be
 ‘ ready to forgive those, who are betrayed into
 ‘ it by want of knowledge or skill, and to weep
 ‘ over those, who commit it from motives of
 ‘ envy, (for they are truly deserving of his

‘ pity), he ought yet not to think his influence
 ‘ diminished by either of them: for, if a supe-
 ‘ rior painter, who surpassed all others in his
 ‘ art, were to see a portrait, which he had
 ‘ finished with scrupulous exactness, exposed to
 ‘ ridicule by persons, who are ignorant of the art
 ‘ of painting, it would ill become him to be dis-
 ‘ heartened, and to think his picture a bad one
 ‘ out of deference to the judgment of ignorant
 ‘ critics, any more than he would believe
 ‘ another picture, that was really ill executed,
 ‘ to be admirable and delightful, because it
 ‘ excited the amazement of the vulgar. Ra-
 ‘ ther the good artist himself ought to be
 ‘ the judge of his own performances, and
 ‘ they should be considered good, or bad,
 ‘ according as the mind, that formed them,
 ‘ awards the decision. But let him not pay
 ‘ any regard to the erroneous and ignorant opi-
 ‘ nion of those, who are uninstructed in the
 ‘ art! and for the same reason let not a teacher,
 ‘ who is put in competition with others, regard
 ‘ the applauses of heathens, or distress himself
 ‘ about them, but so construct his discourses,
 ‘ as to please God! For this, not applause,

' not fame, should be the only rule of his per-
 ' formance. If indeed he is praised by men
 ' also, let him not reject their commendation !
 ' But, if his hearers withhold it, let him not
 ' feel himself hurt by the loss ! For it is a
 ' sufficient comfort for him amidst his labours,
 ' and indeed it surpasses all other consolation,
 ' if he be conscious to himself of having formed
 ' and regulated his instruction so as to please
 ' God. On the other hand, if he be instigated
 ' by an appetite for unreasonable flattery, his
 ' deep study will be of no use to him, nor yet
 ' his excellence in speaking ; for the spirit,
 ' which is not firm enough to sustain the ground-
 ' less censures of the multitude, is paralysed,
 ' and abandons all attempt at eloquence : and
 ' this renders it necessary, that he should be
 ' trained to disregard praise ; for no skill in
 ' oratory can maintain itself even at its present
 ' height, unless this qualification be added.

' Yet, if we were to examine strictly even
 ' those, who are inferior in this talent, it will
 ' be found as necessary for them, as for those,
 ' who excel in it, to despise the praises of the
 ' many : for, if they be slaves to popular glory,

‘ they will be driven to commit many sins. For
 ‘ example, being incompetent to rival those,
 ‘ who bear a high reputation for eloquence,
 ‘ they will not scruple to assail them, to regard
 ‘ them with envy, and censure them without
 ‘ cause, but will be guilty of many such delin-
 ‘ quencies, upon which they will venture with-
 ‘ out remorse, though they should endanger the
 ‘ loss even of their own souls in their zeal to
 ‘ reduce the glory of their rivals to the level of
 ‘ their own incapacity : and yet with all this
 ‘ they still shrink from the labour of composi-
 ‘ tion, as if they had been seized with a stupor ;
 ‘ for, since they can hope to obtain but little
 ‘ praise after using much exertion, this state
 ‘ of things is enough to overpower and relax
 ‘ the energies of any, who are not proof against
 ‘ the ensnaring seductions of flattery, in the
 ‘ same way as the husbandman, who is con-
 ‘ strained to bestow labour upon a poor soil, or
 ‘ to cultivate rocks, is soon induced to desist,
 ‘ if his zeal in the business be not ardent, or
 ‘ his efforts stimulated by the fear of want :
 ‘ for, if those, who have great fluency of
 ‘ speech, yet stand in need of so much practice

‘ in their art for the purpose of securing their
 ‘ possession of it, what difficulty, what exer-
 ‘ tion, what trouble must he undergo, who has
 ‘ acquired no skill in it, but is compelled to
 ‘ labor in the preparation of his public addresses
 ‘ in hope by much toil to obtain a little suc-
 ‘ cess? Then, if it should happen, that some
 ‘ one in a lower rank gains some distinction
 ‘ above him in this department, he has need of
 ‘ a divine spirit, to preserve him from being
 ‘ seized with malignity, and overwhelmed with
 ‘ despair: for it marks no ordinary mind, cer-
 ‘ tainly is not the character of mine, nay, rather
 ‘ it requires a soul of adamant, to bear with
 ‘ calmness the mortification of being surpassed
 ‘ by persons, who are our inferiors in station or
 ‘ character. If indeed the individual, who
 ‘ excels him, be a modest and unassuming
 ‘ character, the trial appears in some measure
 ‘ tolerable. But, if he should be forward, and
 ‘ vain, and fond of distinction, he will compel
 ‘ his superior to wish for death every day. So
 ‘ unpleasant will he make his life to him by
 ‘ triumphing over him in public, sneering at
 ‘ him in private, tearing his authority in pieces,

‘ and seeking to be the only object of regard :
 ‘ besides which he feels himself secure in his
 ‘ usurpation from having acquired a great
 ‘ confidence of speech, much regard among
 ‘ the rabble, and the love of all the pa-
 ‘ rishioners. Do you not know, what a rage
 ‘ for eloquence is now prevailing in the minds
 ‘ of christians, and that those, who cultivate it
 ‘ with success, are the persons in highest re-
 ‘ pute of all men, not only among the heathen,
 ‘ but in the very household of faith ? How
 ‘ then can any one be expected to bear the dis-
 ‘ grace of seeing all men silent, when he speaks,
 ‘ thinking it an interruption, and looking for-
 ‘ ward to the end of his discourse, as a season
 ‘ of rest from their uneasiness, although, when
 ‘ another makes even a long speech, they hear
 ‘ him with patience, are grieved, when he comes
 ‘ to a close, and are offended, if he resolves
 ‘ to be silent ? For these trials, however light
 ‘ they may appear to you, and easy to be disre-
 ‘ garded, because you have not experienced
 ‘ them, are yet sufficient to quench the zeal,
 ‘ and relax the activity of a soul, which has
 ‘ not yet weaned itself from all human feel-

' ings, and become trained to a disposition,
 ' suited to those unembodied spirits, who are
 ' not haunted by envy, or the love of glory, or
 ' by any other similar malady: for, if among
 ' all mankind there be any one person, who is
 ' capable of treading that intractable, ungovern-
 ' able, and remorseless monster, (I mean the
 ' opinion of the multitude), under his feet, and
 ' to cut off its many heads, or rather not to
 ' suffer any of them to grow, he will be able
 ' to resist with ease these numerous attacks,
 ' and to reach a tranquil haven. But, if he be
 ' not delivered from this foible, he exposes
 ' himself to a warfare most complicated in its
 ' character, to perpetual confusion, and to a host
 ' of distresses, and other calamities. Why
 ' should I enumerate his various troubles, since
 ' no one, who has not himself been involved
 ' in them, will be able either to describe, or to
 ' comprehend them ?

BOOK THE SIXTH.

‘ You have now heard the state of the case
‘ here below. But how shall we endure the
‘ consequences above, when we shall have to
‘ render an account for every one of those,
‘ who have been committed to our care? For
‘ disgrace is not there the whole of the punish-
‘ ment, but everlasting ^{κόλασις} vengeance succeeds.
‘ I have indeed already quoted the text—
“ Obey them, that have the rule over you,
“ and submit yourselves! For they watch
“ for your souls, as they, that must give ac-
“ count.” But yet I cannot pass it by on the
‘ present occasion, since the apprehension of
‘ this threat perpetually haunts and harrasses my
‘ soul: for if it were better for the person, who
‘ offends only one, and him the least of his bre-
‘ thren, that a millstone were hanged about his
‘ neck, and he cast into the sea, and if all, who
‘ wound the consciences of the brethren, are

' guilty of sinning against Christ himself, what
 ' will they have to undergo, who have destroyed
 ' not one or two persons, but such multitudes?
 ' What punishment (I repeat) will they suffer?
 ' For they can neither pretend inexperience, nor
 ' resort to the plea of ignorance, nor to the
 ' pretext of necessity and compulsion, which are
 ' all excuses, much better suited to the case of
 ' the laity, who are answerable only for their
 ' own sins, than to the clergy, who must render
 ' an account for the sins of others.

' What then is the consequence? That he,
 ' whose situation requires him to correct the
 ' errors of others, and to discern the hellish
 ' war at a distance, will not be permitted to
 ' pretend ignorance, or to say—"I did not hear
 ' "the trumpet. I did not foresee the war."
 ' For he was posted, as Ezekiel says, for this
 ' express purpose, that he might blow the
 ' trumpet to others, and forewarn them of the
 ' coming danger: and for this reason his punish-
 ' ment cannot be averted, even though there
 ' should be but one person lost through his
 ' neglect: for if, when the sword is coming, the
 ' watchman should not blow the trumpet, and

‘ warn the people, and the sword should come,
 ‘ and destroy, the victim dies in his iniquity.
 “ But his blood ” (says he) “ will I require at the
 “ watchman’s hand.” Desist therefore from
 ‘ exposing me to so inevitable a sentence !

‘ For the subject we are now discussing is not
 ‘ the command of an army, or a kingdom, but
 ‘ a work, which demands angelic virtue. For the
 ‘ soul of the priest ought to be purer than the
 ‘ sun-beams, that the Holy Spirit may never leave
 ‘ him empty, but that he may be enabled to say
 ‘ —“ I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.”
 ‘ For if those, who retire into the wilderness,
 ‘ and are exempt from the troubles of the city
 ‘ and the forum, enjoying only the harbour, and
 ‘ a perpetual calm, are yet not satisfied with
 ‘ the security, which that life affords them, but
 ‘ resort to numberless other precautions, fenc-
 ‘ ing themselves with every safeguard, and
 ‘ observing an extreme exactness in all their
 ‘ words and actions, that as far as human ability
 ‘ extends, they may approach God with confi-
 ‘ dence and real purity, what strength and power
 ‘ do you imagine he requires, who is consecrated
 ‘ to the priesthood, that he may be able to

‘ deliver his soul from all defilement, and to
 ‘ keep its spiritual beauty bright? Surely he
 ‘ stands in need even of a more perfect purity
 ‘ than they do; and, while he requires a greater
 ‘ purity, he is subject also to fiercer assaults,
 ‘ by which his spirit is sure to be ruffled, unless
 ‘ he renders himself inaccessible to such vexa-
 ‘ tions by continual fasting, and great labour:
 ‘ for both beauty of countenance, and grace of
 ‘ gesture, and elegance of gait, and refinement
 ‘ of language, and the painted eye-brow, and
 ‘ the rouged cheek, and the braided lock, and
 ‘ the artificially colored hair, and the costly
 ‘ dress, set off with a diversity of golden orna-
 ‘ ments and fragrant perfumes, and those other
 ‘ arts, by which the female sex improve their
 ‘ attractions, are sufficient to disturb a soul,
 ‘ that is not hardened by much austerity and
 ‘ prudence. Yet, that these things should dis-
 ‘ compose the mind, is no matter of wonder.
 ‘ But it is a cause of deep astonishment and
 ‘ serious perplexity to observe, how the devil
 ‘ contrives by the very contrary arts to these to
 ‘ wound and injure the souls of men: for
 ‘ there are persons, who, having escaped these

‘ snares, have been caught in others of a very
 ‘ different nature : for even a neglected face,
 ‘ and dishevelled hair, and a slovenly attire, and
 ‘ unfashionable address, and blunt manners,
 ‘ and plain language, and inartificial gait, and
 ‘ unmusical voice, and a life of penury, passed
 ‘ amidst contempt, without a protector, and in
 ‘ solitude, have won those, who have noticed
 ‘ it, to compassion, and thence led them on to
 ‘ the last stage of destruction, so, that many,
 ‘ who have not been allured by the first temp-
 ‘ tations, which I mentioned, as golden orna-
 ‘ ments, and perfumes, and apparel, and the
 ‘ rest, have been easily mastered by these, so
 ‘ far different from them, and perished. Since
 ‘ therefore a war is kindled in the soul of the
 ‘ spectator, and machinations surround him on
 ‘ every side through the poverty of some, and
 ‘ the riches of others, through the magnificence
 ‘ of wealth, and the carelessness of want,
 ‘ through refinement in one case, and simplicity
 ‘ in another, how shall he find time to breathe
 ‘ with so many dangers, enclosing him in a
 ‘ circle ? What retreat can he look for, that
 ‘ he may avoid not so much being taken by

‘ force (for there is no difficulty on that point),
 ‘ but the agitation of his soul by the intrusion
 ‘ of wicked thoughts ?

‘ And then I say nothing on the subject of
 ‘ honorary distinctions, though these are occasions of innumerable evils : for such of them as
 ‘ are conferred by women, relax the firmness of
 ‘ self-discipline, and are even ruinous to the
 ‘ soul, if it be not constantly on its guard
 ‘ against temptation ; and those, which are conferred by men, if they are not received with
 ‘ real greatness of mind, implicate their objects
 ‘ in two opposite vices, the servility of adulation,
 ‘ and the intemperance of boasting ; for they
 ‘ are brought under a necessity of cringing to
 ‘ those, who gratify them ; and then, being flattered by them in return, they behave with
 ‘ vanity towards their inferiors, and fall into the
 ‘ gulf of pride.

‘ These several dangers I have indeed described. But no one can well learn without
 ‘ experience, how dangerous they are : for it is
 ‘ an inevitable consequence of engaging in public
 ‘ life, that not only these, but many other and
 ‘ much more pernicious evils must be en-

‘ countered ; from all which the man, who is
 ‘ fond of retirement, has an exemption ; or, if
 ‘ an aspiring fancy should ever paint any of
 ‘ these mischiefs to his mind, it is but a feeble
 ‘ representation of the reality, and the idea is
 ‘ soon extinguished, there being no fuel added
 ‘ to the flame from without by his presence in
 ‘ the scene of action.

‘ Again the monk fears for himself alone ;
 ‘ or, if he should have occasion to concern
 ‘ himself about others, it is at most but for
 ‘ a limited number, who moreover are not
 ‘ only fewer than those, who are assembled
 ‘ in the church, but occasion far less anxiety
 ‘ to the person, who has the management
 ‘ of them, not only on account of their being
 ‘ a smaller body, but inasmuch as they are
 ‘ also relieved from all worldly concerns, and
 ‘ have no trouble with either children, or wife,
 ‘ or any similar encumbrance ; which ren-
 ‘ ders them very obedient to their governors.
 ‘ It enables them also to live in common ;
 ‘ and thus their teachers by constant superinten-
 ‘ dence find opportunities to examine, overlook,
 ‘ and correct their respective errors : which is

' of no small advantage for the promotion of
 ' virtue. Of those, on the other hand, who
 ' form the charge of the priest, the greater
 ' part are entangled in secular cares ; which
 ' render them less ready for the perfor-
 ' mance of spiritual exercises : and hence it
 ' becomes necessary for him to scatter the
 ' seed, if I may so express myself, daily,
 ' that the word of instruction may at least
 ' by habit come to be retained by the hearers :
 ' for great riches, and excessive power, and
 ' the indolence, which is fostered by luxury,
 ' and many other impediments besides choke
 ' the seed, which is sown ; and sometimes the
 ' thorns are so closely compacted, that they
 ' will not suffer it even to reach the soil ; and
 ' on the other hand severe tribulation, and pinch-
 ' ing poverty, and numerous insults, and other
 ' such impediments, though of a contrary nature
 ' to the former, detract from men's zeal for divine
 ' objects, while yet not even the smallest part
 ' of these failings may be obvious to their su-
 ' perintendant ; for how indeed can he perceive
 ' them, when he does not know the greater
 ' number of his parishioners by sight ?

‘ Thus even in the state of his flock he has
 ‘ abundant cause of perplexity. Yet, if we
 ‘ consider the account he must give to God,
 ‘ we shall find those difficulties to be nothing.
 ‘ So much greater and exacter is the zeal, which
 ‘ this consideration requires from him.

‘ For what ought to be the character of the
 ‘ man, who is to be an ambassador for the
 ‘ whole state?—and yet why do I say state?—
 ‘ nay, rather for the whole world? and who
 ‘ beseeches God to be propitious to the sins of
 ‘ all men, not only of the living, but also of
 ‘ the departed? For my part I think the
 ‘ importunate boldness of Moses and Elijah
 ‘ quite insufficient for the supplication, which
 ‘ he has to offer: for he has to approach God,
 ‘ just as if the care of the world were committed
 ‘ to him, and as if he were himself the uni-
 ‘ versal father, beseeching him, that wars in
 ‘ all places may be suppressed, and tumults
 ‘ quelled, and that peace, prosperity, and a
 ‘ speedy removal of all the evils, that impend
 ‘ over every one both publicly and privately, may
 ‘ ensue: and he may therefore be fitly expected
 ‘ to excel all those, for whom he intercedes, in all

‘ qualities, as much as it becomes a president to
 ‘ excel those, over whom he presides. For, when
 ‘ he invokes the ~~holy~~ spirit, and offers that most
 ‘ awful sacrifice, and handles for a long time
 ‘ the universal lord of all, (tell me!) in what
 ‘ rank shall we place him? What purity shall
 ‘ we exact from him, what devotion? For
 ‘ consider, what kind of hands those ought to
 ‘ be, which minister in such a service, what
 ‘ kind of tongue, that utters those words!
 ‘ What proficiency in purity and holiness is
 ‘ found on Earth, which ought not to be sur-
 ‘ passed by the soul, that entertains so great a
 ‘ spirit? Then also there are angels, who stand
 ‘ near the priest, and all the order of the hea-
 ‘ venly powers raise their voice, and the place
 ‘ around the altar is filled in honour of the
 ‘ victim, as the greatness of the rites, then
 ‘ celebrated, may well incline us to believe.
 ‘ But besides this I once heard a person relate
 ‘ what an elderly venerable man, who had been
 ‘ accustomed to see revelations, told him,
 ‘ namely, that he had on one occasion been
 ‘ honored with a sight of such a vision, and
 ‘ that at that time he perceived suddenly as

‘ far as it was possible for a man to perceive,
 ‘ a multitude of angels, clothed with shining
 ‘ robes, and surrounding the altar, and bending
 ‘ downward, as soldiers are seen to stand in the
 ‘ presence of their sovereign : and I believe it.
 ‘ Another individual also, who had not learned
 ‘ it from a third person, but had himself been
 ‘ permitted to see and hear it, declared to me,
 ‘ that the angels, forming a guard round those,
 ‘ who are on the point of departing, if pre-
 ‘ viously to their expiring they have partaken
 ‘ of the mysteries in a pure conscience, carry
 ‘ them hence in consideration of what they
 ‘ have received. Do you not then at all shudder
 ‘ at the thought of introducing such a soul as
 ‘ mine to the performance of so sacred a cere-
 ‘ mony, or of preferring to the dignity of priests
 ‘ a man, covered with filthy garments, such as
 ‘ the intruder, whom Christ thrust out from the
 ‘ rest of his company of guests ? For the soul
 ‘ of the priest ought to shine, like that of a
 ‘ man, who gives light to the world, whereas
 ‘ mine is enveloped through an evil conscience
 ‘ in so thick a darkness as to be ever sinking,
 ‘ and never able to look with stedfast boldness

‘ to its maker. Priests are the salt of the
 ‘ earth. But who, except yourself, who have
 ‘ contracted a habit of loving me to excess,
 ‘ could easily tolerate my folly and inexperience
 ‘ in all things ?

‘ For a priest ought not only to be pure, as
 ‘ being honored with so great a ministry. He
 ‘ should also be very intelligent, and experienced
 ‘ in many affairs, and even equally skilful in
 ‘ all secular business with those, who are
 ‘ engaged in it, while yet he must be more
 ‘ entirely detached from the love of it than the
 ‘ anchorites, who resort to the mountains : for,
 ‘ since it is his very sphere to converse with
 ‘ men, who have wives, and children, and ser-
 ‘ vants, and are encompassed with much wealth,
 ‘ and manage public affairs, and are entrusted
 ‘ with governments, he must needs be versatile.
 ‘ By versatile however I mean neither mean,
 ‘ nor flattering, nor hypocritical, but possessed
 ‘ of much freedom and confidence, knowing
 ‘ how to condescend with dignity, when the
 ‘ nature of the case requires it, and to be at
 ‘ once accommodating, and firm ; for it is impos-
 ‘ sible to treat all, who are placed under his

' authority, in the same manner, any more than
 ' it is fit for physicians to prescribe alike to all
 ' patients, or for a pilot to be acquainted with
 ' but one method of contending against the
 ' winds. This indeed is a vessel, which is sur-
 ' rounded with continual tempests, and the tem-
 ' pests not only assault it from without, but arise
 ' from within likewise, so as to require great
 ' management and dexterity. Yet all these
 ' varied cares look but to one end, the glory of
 ' God, the edification of the church.

' Great is the warfare of monks, and their toil
 ' immense. Yet, if their labours are compared
 ' with those of a well regulated priesthood, the
 ' difference will be found as great as that be-
 ' tween a private man and a king: for in their
 ' case though the labour be great, yet the
 ' struggle is divided between the soul and the
 ' body; or rather the greater part is supported
 ' by the strength of the body, and, if that
 ' be weak, their zeal is unsustained, and can
 ' not find vent in action; for both continual
 ' fasting, and lying on the ground, and watch-
 ' ing, and the want of washing, and profuse
 ' perspirations, and other austerities, which help

' to reduce the body, are all impracticable, if
 ' the person, who is to submit to them, be not
 ' strong. But the ministerial office is the ex-
 ' clusive work of the unencumbered spirit, and
 ' does not require a good habit of body, to dis-
 ' play its excellence : for what advantage does
 ' strength of body contribute towards our main-
 ' taining a freedom from obstinacy, or anger,
 ' or rashness, or towards our being sober, tem-
 ' perate, and orderly, and possessing all those
 ' other qualities, with which saint Paul has filled
 ' up the portrait of a perfect priest ? This
 ' however can not be affirmed concerning
 ' the virtue of the monk. But, as showmen,
 ' when they exhibit experiments, cannot pro-
 ' ceed without suitable instruments, such as
 ' wheels, and ropes, and knives, while the
 ' philosopher has all the requisites of his
 ' science in himself, and is independent of ex-
 ' ternal assistance, it is the same here : for it is
 ' necessary, that the monk should not only have
 ' a good constitution, but that he should also
 ' have a fit habitation for his purpose, one, that
 ' is not too remote from human intercourse, and
 ' yet may ensure the tranquillity of solitude ;

‘ and it must at the same time be situated in
 ‘ the mildest air ; for to a person, wasted with
 ‘ fasting, nothing is so intolerable as any in-
 ‘ clemency of weather : and to this I need not
 ‘ now add the occupation, which devolves upon
 ‘ them, of preparing their own clothing and
 ‘ diet, as it is their ambition to do every thing
 ‘ for themselves. Now the priest will want
 ‘ none of these things. He is neither nice, nor
 ‘ particular in regard to any indifferent matters ;
 ‘ for he comprehends the whole mystery of his
 ‘ science within the treasury of his soul. How-
 ‘ ever, as people admire the rigours of monas-
 ‘ ticism, I will myself acknowledge them to be
 ‘ evidences of self-denial, but cannot regard
 ‘ them, as adequate tests of perfect magnanimity,
 ‘ any more than it is a sufficient proof of skill in
 ‘ navigation to sit at the helm in a port, whereas,
 ‘ if any one can preserve the vessel in the midst
 ‘ of the sea in a tempest, no one will deny him
 ‘ the character of an excellent navigator. We
 ‘ must not therefore yield an undue, an excessive
 ‘ admiration to the monk, because he is not
 ‘ agitated in his cell, or because he does not
 ‘ commit there any numerous or very grievous

‘ offences ; for he has nothing there to provoke
 ‘ or agitate his spirit. But, if there be any one,
 ‘ who after devoting himself to the care of a
 ‘ vast multitude, and being forced to bear the
 ‘ sins of many, remains still steadfast and im-
 ‘ moveable, piloting his soul in a tempest, as
 ‘ though all were calm, such an one deserves
 ‘ universal applause and admiration ; for he has
 ‘ given adequate proof of his stability.

‘ Do not therefore suffer yourself to feel any
 ‘ surprise, if I, who avoid the forum and common
 ‘ places of resort, have not many accusers !
 ‘ for I should not be applauded for not doing
 ‘ wrong, while I was asleep, or for not being
 ‘ thrown down at a time, when I was not wrest-
 ‘ ling, or for not being wounded, when I did
 ‘ not fight. For who (tell me !), who is
 ‘ there, that can give information against
 ‘ me, and discover my wickedness ? This
 ‘ bed, and this chamber ? They cannot
 ‘ utter a voice. Or is it my mother, who
 ‘ has the most intimate knowledge of my
 ‘ heart ? But we have no common property,
 ‘ and never came to any contention : and in-
 ‘ deed, if such a case had happened, there is no

' mother so unnatural, none, who could bear
 ' such hatred to her offspring as to impeach the
 ' child, whom she had borne, bred, and nursed,
 ' and to calumniate him in public without any
 ' motive to tempt her, or any person to con-
 ' strain her. You however, though you have at
 ' all times, and before all men spoken in my
 ' praise, must be aware, that, were any one
 ' desirous to sift my soul to the bottom, he
 ' would find out many of its corruptions. Nor
 ' do I say this from mere diffidence: for recollect
 ' yourself! and you must be sensible, how many
 ' times I have told you, when we were engaged
 ' in a debate of this kind, that, if I had the choice
 ' of distinguishing myself either in the govern-
 ' ment of a church, or in the monastic life, I
 ' should give the preference to the former ten
 ' thousand times over; for I have never ceased in
 ' your presence to say, how happy I considered
 ' those persons, who have been able to discharge
 ' this high office with advantage: and none cer-
 ' tainly can imagine, that I would have avoided
 ' the state, which I myself accounted blessed,
 ' had I thought myself competent to undertake

' it. But what should I do ? For there is no
 ' less favorable preparation for the government
 ' of a church than that exemption from business
 ' and care, which others think an admirable
 ' discipline for it, but which I use, as a cloak
 ' for my unprofitableness, with which to
 ' cover the greater part of my deficiencies,
 ' and keep them from becoming known :
 ' for any one, who has been long habituated to
 ' such retirement, and has passed his life in
 ' tranquillity, whatever may be his greatness
 ' of soul, is yet harassed and hindered by his
 ' own inactivity, and the very want of practice
 ' cripples his ability in no slight degree. But,
 ' if his understanding is slow, and he has
 ' also no experience in these duties, which
 ' is the case with me at present, he will be
 ' no better than a statue, when engaged in
 ' the management of such an office : whence
 ' it arises, that few become conspicuous, who
 ' are brought out of that school to this scene of
 ' labour, but most of them are overpowered,
 ' and fail, and undergo difficult and painful
 ' trials : nor is this surprising ; for, when the
 ' actual contest and the preparatory institution

‘ are not regulated with the same view, the
 ‘ practised combatant has no advantage over
 ‘ the uninstructed. He, who engages in these
 ‘ struggles, must chiefly despise glory, must be
 ‘ superior to anger, and imbued with much
 ‘ wisdom, in all which points the monastic
 ‘ life affords no exercise to those, who embrace
 ‘ it ; for they have few to irritate them, that
 ‘ so they may curb the violence of their wrath ;
 ‘ they have few to congratulate and applaud
 ‘ them, that so they may train themselves to
 ‘ neglect the praises of the multitude ; neither
 ‘ have they much occasion for that intelligence,
 ‘ which is required in the government of
 ‘ churches. When therefore they embark in
 ‘ an enterprise, for the conduct of which they
 ‘ have made no preparation, they are embar-
 ‘ rassed ; they become confused ; they fall into
 ‘ perplexity ; and besides not making any
 ‘ accession to their stock of virtue many of
 ‘ them often lose even that, which they brought
 ‘ with them.’

Upon this Basil exclaims—‘ What must we
 ‘ do then ? Shall we place those men in the
 ‘ management of our churches, who are sunk

‘ in worldly pleasure, occupied in secular business, engaged in battles and quarrels, full of unnumbered artifices, habituated to luxury?’

‘ Be patient, my good friend!’—said I. ‘ These men ought not to come into our mind, when we are inquiring for priests. But might we not find one, who, living in the world, and conversing with mankind, maintains his purity, his obedience, his self-command, holiness, abstinence, and the like monastic virtues, uncontaminated, to a greater degree than even those eremites themselves? whereas, he, who, though possessing many faults, contrives to hide them by retirement, and to neutralize their evil effects by withdrawing from society, will assuredly on coming forward into public life gain nothing, but ridicule, and expose himself to considerable danger; which I was myself upon the point of experiencing, when the goodness of God unexpectedly turned aside the flame from my head: for a man of this character cannot avoid discovery, when he comes into a public situation, but is sure to be detected; for as certainly as the fire proves metallic substances, the trials of a

' clerical life put to the proof the souls of
 ' men, whether they be passionate, or pusilla-
 ' nimous, vain-glorious, boastful, or any thing
 ' else. It discloses all, and soon lays bare
 ' their failings; nor does it only lay them
 ' bare, but frets them also, and renders them
 ' sorer, and more painful : for as the wounds of
 ' the body are exasperated by friction, so also
 ' are the feelings of the soul rendered more
 ' violent by excitement and irritation, which
 ' drive those, who are under their influence, to
 ' the commission of still greater sins, puffing them
 ' up, if they be not on their guard, with the love
 ' of glory, and thus inciting them to ostentation
 ' and covetousness as well as to the indulgence
 ' of luxury, indolence, and pleasure, and so by
 ' little and little to other evils, greater than
 ' these, but arising out of them : for there are
 ' many things in public life, calculated to dis-
 ' turb the equanimity of a christian, and to
 ' obstruct the race of God ; and the chief of
 ' these is the necessity of holding intercourse
 ' with females, it not being allowable for a
 ' rector, whose duty extends to the whole
 ' flock, to attend only to the men, and neglect

' the women. In fact these require greater
 ' vigilance in consequence of their greater
 ' proneness to sin ; and hence, when he enters
 ' upon his charge, he must bestow upon them,
 ' if not more, at least equal care with the
 ' others : for he is required both to visit them,
 ' when sick, and to comfort them, when dis-
 ' tressed, to rebuke them, if they are idle, and
 ' to succour them in want : and in the per-
 ' formance of these duties many openings arise
 ' for the entrance of the evil one, if he be not
 ' fortified against his attacks by the exactest
 ' self-discipline : for not only the eye of the
 ' incontinent, but even that of modest females has
 ' power to wound and agitate the soul. Their
 ' flattery will unman, their kindness enslave it ;
 ' and thus may even fervent charity, that
 ' source of every good, become the fountain of
 ' innumerable evils to those, who make an indis-
 ' creet use of it : for continual anxiety will blunt
 ' the acuteness of the intellect, and render the
 ' winged spirit duller than lead itself, till at
 ' length resentment, finding an entrance,
 ' obscures all, that is within, like smoke.

' Why should I mention the many other

' mischiefs, which await him, what insults,
 ' what injuries he will meet with, how he will
 ' be censured by superiors, by inferiors, by the
 ' wise, and by the unwise, who indeed, being
 ' destitute of a correct judgment, are the most
 ' censorious of any, and will scarcely admit of
 ' an apology? Nevertheless it is necessary
 ' for a good pastor not to despise even these,
 ' but to answer all men on the subjects of their
 ' accusation with great meekness and gentle-
 ' ness, pardoning rather than resenting their
 ' unreasonable censures: for if the blessed Paul
 ' was afraid, lest he should incur the suspicion
 ' of dishonesty among the disciples, and for
 ' that reason took others with him, to distribute
 ' the money, which he had collected, that no
 ' one might blame him in this abundance,
 ' "which," as he said, "is administered by us," is
 ' it not much more incumbent upon us to do
 ' every thing, that may silence all evil surmises,
 ' even though they be false, though they be
 ' unreasonable, though they be altogether foreign
 ' to our intention? For we have none of us
 ' abstained from any sin with so much clear-
 ' ness as Paul abstained from theft: and yet,

‘ far as he was from that criminal propensity,
 ‘ he notwithstanding did not slight the suspi-
 ‘ cions of the multitude, however unreasonable
 ‘ and senseless, nay, though it would have been
 ‘ madness itself to harbour a suspicion of that
 ‘ sort against that blessed and wonderful man.
 ‘ Yet even of this suspicion, so very extrava-
 ‘ gant, of which no one in his senses could
 ‘ dream, he removes the occasion, not despising
 ‘ the stupidity of the mob, or saying—“ Who
 “ could possibly suspect me of such a crime,
 “ when all both honor and admire me as well
 “ for my miracles as for my contentedness
 “ and moderation ?” But on the contrary
 ‘ he both suspects and forestals this cruel
 ‘ suspicion, and attends to it at a distance ; or
 ‘ rather he stifles it before its birth : and where-
 ‘ fore ? “ Because” (says he) “ we provide for
 “ honest things not only in the sight of the
 “ Lord, but also in the sight of men.” So much,
 ‘ or rather even greater vigilance ought we to
 ‘ use, that we may not only obviate the
 ‘ suspicions, that actually arise, and put down
 ‘ all evil reports, but observe beforehand the
 ‘ causes, from which they may spring, and cut

' off all occasions, that may give rise to them, and
 ' not wait, till they are actually raised, and come
 ' into public conversation : for then it is no longer
 ' an easy matter to put a stop to them, but is
 ' even exceedingly difficult, and almost impos-
 ' sible ; nor can any one accomplish it with-
 ' out sustaining some injury to his character
 ' from the rude attacks of the multitude.
 ' But how long shall I persist in attempting to
 ' enumerate what cannot be entirely counted?
 ' For to sum up all the difficulties in his way
 ' is a task, like that of measuring the sea,
 ' since, even though a man were himself pure
 ' from every passion, which is an impossibility,
 ' he would yet be subjected to innumerable
 ' trials in his attempt to correct the failings
 ' of others. But, when his private com-
 ' plaints are added to the account, behold the
 ' abyss of toils, and troubles, and distresses,
 ' which he will have to suffer, in order to over-
 ' come at once his own deficiencies, and the
 ' vices of other persons ! '

' But' (said Basil) ' have you now no occasion
 ' for conflict? Have you no anxieties, while
 ' living by yourself?'

‘ I have’ (replied I) ‘ even now : for how can
 ‘ any man in this toilsome and troublesome
 ‘ life be free from anxiety, or conflict ? How-
 ‘ ever it is not the same thing to embark upon
 ‘ the boundless ocean, and to sail along a river ;
 ‘ for such is the difference between these
 ‘ anxieties and the others. For, if I were able
 ‘ at present to do good to others, it is my wish
 ‘ to do so, and the object of my earnest prayers.
 ‘ But, if I find it impossible to benefit my
 ‘ neighbour, I must be content, that I have
 ‘ the power of saving myself, and so make my
 ‘ escape from the stormy sea.’

‘ Do you think it then’ (interrupted Basil)
 ‘ so great an achievement to be saved yourself
 ‘ without being serviceable to any one ? ’

‘ Your inquiry’ (said I) ‘ is reasonable and per-
 ‘ tinent : for indeed I can never bring myself to
 ‘ believe, that any one can be saved without
 ‘ using efforts for the salvation of his neighbour,
 ‘ forasmuch as it was of no advantage to the
 ‘ wretch in the parable, that he had not dimi-
 ‘ nished his talent, but he perished for not
 ‘ having augmented, and even doubled it. Not-
 ‘ withstanding this I imagine my punishment

' will be lighter, if I am only charged with not
 ' having saved others, than if I had ruined
 ' them and myself too, and been rendered a
 ' worse character by the distinguished honour,
 ' bestowed upon me : for though even now I
 ' must look for as severe a punishment as the
 ' magnitude of my offences demands, yet after
 ' receiving that commission I should expect
 ' not double measure only, or triple, but mani-
 ' fold, in consideration of my having not only
 ' offended more grievously, but having also,
 ' after a greater distinction had been con-
 ' ferred upon me, offended the God, who
 ' conferred it. It was for this reason, that the
 ' Lord in accusing the Israelites pronounced
 ' them worthy of a severer chastisement, because
 ' they had sinned after more distinguished
 ' blessings. "You only have I known of all
 ' the families of the earth. Therefore I will
 ' "punish you for all your iniquities"—; and in
 ' another place—"I raised up of your sons for
 ' "prophets, and of your young men for naza-
 ' "rites"—: and before the time of the prophets
 ' in the very institution of sacrifices he shewed,
 ' that offences, committed by priests, incur a

‘ far heavier punishment than those, committed
 ‘ by other men ; for he directs as large a sacri-
 ‘ fice to be offered for the priests as for all the
 ‘ people, implying that errors in a priest require
 ‘ stronger correctives, as strong indeed as those
 ‘ of the whole people together. Now they would
 ‘ not require stronger remedies, if they were not
 ‘ more offensive ; and they are more offensive,
 ‘ not in their own nature, but being aggravated
 ‘ by the dignity of the priest, who ventures to
 ‘ commit them. Yet why do I speak only of
 ‘ the men, who serve in this office ? Even the
 ‘ daughters of the priests, who have no share
 ‘ in the administration of it, yet in considera-
 ‘ tion of their hereditary dignity are subjected
 ‘ to severer treatment than others for the same
 ‘ offences : for, though the crime of fornication
 ‘ is the same in them as in daughters of private
 ‘ individuals, the penalty denounced is much
 ‘ greater. Do you observe, with what super-
 ‘ abundant proof God shews you, that he exacts
 ‘ a far more tremendous account from the chief
 ‘ than from the subject ? For if the priest’s
 ‘ daughter is for the priest’s sake exposed to a
 ‘ sterner sentence than others, certainly the

' priest himself, who is the cause of this in-
 ' creased severity, will be brought to a trial,
 ' not merely equal to that of the multitude,
 ' but to one much more severe, because his
 ' faults, instead of being limited in their conse-
 ' quences to himself alone, overthrow also the
 ' souls of the simple, who look up to his autho-
 ' rity, a truth, which Ezekiel wished to repre-
 ' sent to us by the distinction he introduces
 ' between the judgment of the sheep, and that
 ' of the goats. Will you now admit, that I had
 ' some reason for my alarm ?

' Indeed in addition to what I have urged
 ' it may be remarked, that if even now I have
 ' occasion for great exertion, that I may not be
 ' altogether brought under the mastery of my
 ' passions, still I now submit to the exertion,
 ' and do not shun the contest. For, even as I
 ' am, I am surprised occasionally by the risings
 ' of vanity. But I recover again, and, per-
 ' ceiving, that I have been entangled, chide my
 ' soul for yielding to the temptation. Prepos-
 ' terous desires assail me even now. But they
 ' kindle a slower flame, while the eyes of
 ' others fail to supply it with fuel. However,

‘ so long as I have no one to converse with,
‘ I am clearly exempt from speaking ill of one
‘ person, and hearing another spoken ill of,
‘ since these walls cannot utter a voice. But,
‘ although I have none to provoke me, it is not so
‘ easy to avoid wrath : for the recollection of
‘ foolish persons, and of things, done by them,
‘ recurring to my mind, makes my heart swell
‘ within me, yet not indeed to the utmost ;
‘ for I quickly compose its boiling, and per-
‘ suade it to be quiet, saying, that it is very
‘ wrong, and a proof of very fatuity to pass
‘ over my own faults, that I may busy myself
‘ about those of my neighbours. Nevertheless,
‘ should I come forward into public life, and
‘ be involved in the innumerable troubles,
‘ which attend it, I should no longer be able
‘ to profit by this secret admonition, or to recol-
‘ lect the considerations, that regulate my
‘ conduct on these occasions. On the contrary,
‘ as those, who are forced down precipices by a
‘ current or other violence, foresee the destruc-
‘ tion, into which they are hastening, without
‘ being able to escape from it, so I, having
‘ fallen into a deep vortex of passions, shall be

' able to see my punishment, increasing every
 ' day, but without finding it so easy to control
 ' myself as at present, or to chide away the
 ' evils, by which I am encompassed: for I am
 ' weak, and pusillanimous, easily mastered both
 ' by these passions, and by envy also, which is
 ' worse than all the rest; and I know not how
 ' to bear either insults or honours with equani-
 ' mity, but as these puff me up, so those
 ' humble me unduly. Hence it is, that as
 ' savage beasts, when wanton, and in good con-
 ' dition, prevail over their antagonists, espe-
 ' cially, if they be weak, and inexperienced,
 ' but, when they are wasted with hunger, they
 ' are cured of their violence, and lose much
 ' of their strength, so, that a man may venture
 ' without much courage to contend, and fight
 ' with them, so also is it with respect to the
 ' passions of the soul. He, who weakens them,
 ' brings them under subjection to right reason,
 ' while he, who pampers them, renders them a
 ' more difficult conquest, and so formidable,
 ' that he is compelled to pass his whole
 ' life in slavery and apprehension. What then
 ' is the food of these monsters? That of

‘ vanity is praise, that of pride dignity and
 ‘ power, that of envy other men’s reputation,
 ‘ that of avarice rivalry in gifts, that of licen-
 ‘ tiousness luxury, and much conversation with
 ‘ females, and other things of the rest, all of
 ‘ which will rush upon me, when I enter into
 ‘ public life, and tear my soul in pieces, and,
 ‘ becoming more and more formidable, will
 ‘ render my warfare with them more painful
 ‘ and severe, whereas, if I remain here in quiet,
 ‘ these enemies will be subdued, not indeed
 ‘ without considerable effort; but still by the
 ‘ grace of God they will be subdued, till no-
 ‘ thing of them remains, but their clamour.
 ‘ To this end I keep my room, and become an
 ‘ inaccessible, unsociable, unconvertible being,
 ‘ and submit to hear many other such reproaches,
 ‘ which I would willingly wipe off, and I feel
 ‘ pain and grief at not being able to do so.
 ‘ But I do not find it an easy matter to attend at
 ‘ the same time to the claims of society, and of
 ‘ prudence, and am consequently reduced to a
 ‘ dilemma, which demands your commiseration
 ‘ rather than your censure.

‘ However, as I have not yet succeeded in

' persuading you of this, I must now open my
 ' only remaining argument ; which, however in-
 ' credible it may appear to many, yet no sense
 ' of shame shall restrain me from uttering : for
 ' although by what I am now going to say, I
 ' should convict myself of an evil conscience,
 ' and of innumerable faults, yet, since God, who
 ' is to judge me, is already acquainted with the
 ' whole of them, what advantage can I gain by
 ' concealing them from mankind ? What then
 ' is this undiscovered truth ? Since the day, on
 ' which you first hinted to me your suspicion,
 ' that this measure was in agitation, I have often
 ' felt, as if my frame would dissolve. With
 ' such fear, such horror have I been encom-
 ' passed : for on contrasting the glory, the
 ' holiness, the spiritual beauty, the wisdom,
 ' the comeliness of the bride of Christ with my
 ' own contrary imperfections, I never ceased to
 ' bewail her condition, and to vex myself,
 ' groaning under continual dismay and appre-
 ' hension, and saying to myself—" Who is it,
 ' " that has contrived such a plot ? Of what
 ' " crime has the church of God been guilty ?
 ' " How has she so grievously provoked her lord,

“ that she should now be brought under such a
 “ disgrace as to be committed to me, who am
 “ the vilest of all men ? ” With these reflec-
 ‘ tions continually upon my mind, being unable
 ‘ to bear the thought of such inconsistency, I
 ‘ lay speechless, astonished, and incapable
 ‘ either of sight or hearing ; and when this
 ‘ stupefaction had left me (for I had some
 ‘ intermissions), it was succeeded by tears and
 ‘ melancholy ; and, when again I had taken
 ‘ my fill of tears, my terror returned, agitating,
 ‘ and confounding, and unsettling my under-
 ‘ standing. In such a tempest have I passed
 ‘ the interval. You did not know it indeed.
 ‘ You thought I was in peace. But I will now
 ‘ endeavor to describe to you the agony of my
 ‘ soul : for, when you have heard it, you will
 ‘ forgive me, and withdraw the charges you
 ‘ have preferred. How then, by what means
 ‘ can I reveal it to you ? If you would under-
 ‘ stand it thoroughly, it could only be by my
 ‘ laying my heart naked before you ; which
 ‘ being impossible, I will endeavor neverthe-
 ‘ less to represent to you as well as I may
 ‘ by some faint image the horror of my distress

‘ at that period, wishing you only to collect my
 ‘ feelings from the description.

‘ Let us suppose a person, paying his
 ‘ addresses to the daughter of a king of the
 ‘ whole earth! Let it be supposed, that this
 ‘ virgin possesses unrivalled beauty so as even to
 ‘ surpass human nature itself, and leave all
 ‘ her sex at a vast distance behind her, that
 ‘ she is moreover so virtuous as to outdo the
 ‘ whole race of men, that either have been, or
 ‘ ever shall be, that she exceeds the utmost
 ‘ bounds of philosophy in the propriety of her
 ‘ manners, and also, that the charms of her
 ‘ person are eclipsed by the beauty of her
 ‘ countenance! Let us suppose too, that her
 ‘ suitor not only desires her ardently for these
 ‘ reasons, but has an affection for her, inde-
 ‘ pendent of them all, and in this affection
 ‘ outvies the most eager lovers, that have ever
 ‘ existed, and then, that in the midst of his
 ‘ fascination he hears that some worthless fellow,
 ‘ ill-born, deformed, the most profligate of all
 ‘ men, is destined to marry this beloved and
 ‘ admirable creature! Have I thus opened a
 ‘ small part of my case? and is it yet sufficient

‘ to authorize me in stopping here? Enough (I
 ‘ think) has been said to account for my distress :
 ‘ and it was for that purpose alone, that I drew
 ‘ the picture.

‘ But, to shew you the extent of my terror
 ‘ and confusion, let us now pass to another
 ‘ scene ! Let there be an army, consisting of
 ‘ cavalry, infantry, and marines ! Let the
 ‘ number of galleys cover the sea ! Let the
 ‘ columns of infantry and cavalry cover the
 ‘ plains, and the summits of the mountains !
 ‘ Let the brasen arms glitter in the sun ! let
 ‘ the coruscation of the helmets and of the
 ‘ shields be reflected in its beams ! let the
 ‘ clash of spears and the tramp of horses rise
 ‘ to the very heaven ! and let neither sea, nor
 ‘ land be seen, but only brass and steel in
 ‘ every direction ! Then let fierce, and savage,
 ‘ and barbarous enemies be set in array against
 ‘ them, and the moment of engagement be at
 ‘ hand ! After this let some one, laying sudden
 ‘ hold on a child, nursed in the fields, who
 ‘ knows nothing beyond his pipe and crook,
 ‘ arm him with brasen armour, and lead him
 ‘ through the whole camp, shewing him the

‘ companies, the archers, slingers, centurions,
 ‘ generals, heavy-armed troops, horsemen, spear-
 ‘ men, galleys, captains, the armed marines, and
 ‘ the engines, prepared in the ships! Let him
 ‘ shew him too all the array of the enemies,
 ‘ their terrific looks, the peculiar form of
 ‘ their arms, and their infinite multitude!
 ‘ Let him point out to him the dells, and the
 ‘ precipices, and the defiles! and let him
 ‘ further shew him on the side of the enemy
 ‘ horses, that fly by magic, and soldiers, borne
 ‘ through the air! Let him explain to him the
 ‘ power and the form of every charm, recount
 ‘ the calamities of war, the cloud of javelins,
 ‘ the snow-storm of arrows, the deep mist, the
 ‘ impossibility of seeing, and the black night,
 ‘ produced by the cloud of arrows, excluding
 ‘ by their closeness the beams of the sun, the
 ‘ blinding dust, doubling the effect of the
 ‘ darkness, the torrents of blood, the shrieks of
 ‘ the fallen, the shouts of the conquerors, the
 ‘ heaps of men overthrown, the wheels, bathed
 ‘ in blood, the horses, thrown down with their
 ‘ riders by the number of dead bodies in their
 ‘ way, the earth, exhibiting all these scenes in

' promiscuous confusion, blood, and bows, and
 ' arrows, the armour of horses, and heads of
 ' men, lying together, and arms, and necks,
 ' and legs, and breasts transfixed, brains
 ' dashed about with spears, and the point,
 ' broken off from the point of an arrow; yet
 ' having an eye attached to it! and let him
 ' enumerate the disasters, befalling the fleet,
 ' some galleys burnt in the deep, some sinking
 ' with the crew, the roar of the waters, the
 ' confusion of the mariners, the shout of the
 ' soldiers, the mingled foam of billows and
 ' blood, rushing at once upon all the vessels,
 ' the dead upon the benches, the drowned, the
 ' swimming, the shipwrecked, some of them
 ' washed about in the waves, and choking the
 ' passage for the ships! and, after he has thus
 ' minutely instructed him in all the tragedies
 ' of war, let him add next those horrors of
 ' captivity and slavery, which are worse than
 ' every death! and when he has explained the
 ' whole, let him bid him mount horse directly,
 ' and take the command of all this army! Do
 ' you think, that the child will have strength to
 ' hear all this enumeration, and not faint instantly at the very first sight?

‘ Do not imagine however, that in my account
 ‘ of this I have been guilty of exaggeration,
 ‘ or have made an hyperbolical statement!
 ‘ For, pent up, as we are, in this body, like
 ‘ prisoners in a dungeon, we cannot discern
 ‘ the invisible powers. Could you however
 ‘ with these eyes behold the black array of the
 ‘ devil, and his mad conflict, you would witness
 ‘ a battle, much greater and more arduous
 ‘ than that, which I have described to you, a
 ‘ battle, in which there is no brass or steel, no
 ‘ horses and wheeled chariots, no fire and
 ‘ arrows, no visible objects, like any of these,
 ‘ but other instruments, much more formidable.
 ‘ These enemies have no need of breastplates,
 ‘ or shields, or swords, or darts. The sight of
 ‘ this accursed host is alone sufficient to para-
 ‘ lyse a soul, which is not endued with superior
 ‘ courage, and withal furnished by God with
 ‘ still greater foresight than valour. Were it
 ‘ possible by laying aside this body, or even
 ‘ with this body ocularly to survey all his array
 ‘ and war without fear or giddiness, you would
 ‘ see not torrents of blood, or dead bodies, but
 ‘ so many fallen souls. You would perceive

' wounds so grievous, that you would deem the
 ' scene of war, which I just now detailed to
 ' you, mere child's play and idle pastime, not
 ' actual warfare. So many are there struck
 ' down by him every day. And the mortifica-
 ' tion, which these wounds occasion, is not
 ' like that, produced by the others, but as
 ' different from it as the soul is different from
 ' the body ; for, when the soul is wounded,
 ' and falls, it does not lie down, like the body,
 ' without sensation, but is tortured afterwards,
 ' and pines under an evil conscience, and after
 ' its separation at the hour of judgment is
 ' delivered over to everlasting vengeance. *agony*

' Again, if there be any one, who does not *True*
 ' perceive the wounds of the devil, his case
 ' is rendered so much the more grievous by
 ' his insensibility : for whoever feels no pain
 ' from a first wound, will offer no resistance to
 ' a second, or even a third ; and then the
 ' wicked one, finding the soul supine, and
 ' negligent of former attacks, will not desist
 ' from renewing them even to the last gasp.
 ' Then, if you would inquire into the nature of
 ' this combat, you would find it to be much

‘ more ferocious in its character, and diversified
 ‘ in its modes of attack. So many are the
 ‘ shapes of theft and fraud, with which that
 ‘ wicked one is acquainted; for these are
 ‘ the means, by which he acquires his greatest
 ‘ power, neither can any one harbour so
 ‘ implacable an enmity against his worst foes,
 ‘ as that evil ~~demon~~ entertains against all man-
 ‘ kind. If indeed the zeal and earnestness,
 ‘ with which he contends, were duly appre-
 ‘ ciated, it would appear preposterous to com-
 ‘ pare him here with men. Were the fiercest
 ‘ and wildest beasts selected for the purpose,
 ‘ yet, when compared with his fury, they
 ‘ would be judged quite mild and gentle.
 ‘ Such wrath does he breathe out against
 ‘ our souls.

‘ Amongst us also the time of battle is soon
 ‘ over, and within a short period there are many
 ‘ cessations. The approach of night, weariness
 ‘ of slaughter, the hour of food, and many
 ‘ other circumstances naturally make the sol-
 ‘ dier desist, that he may put off his armour,
 ‘ and recruit and refresh himself with food and
 ‘ drink, and recover his strength by many other

means. But as to the assaults of the wicked
 one, he, who would escape from them with-
 out a wound, can never lay aside his arms.
 He must never take rest : for either he will
 fall and perish by losing his armour, or
 he must always stand and watch in it.
 One of these two is unavoidable : for the
 enemy stands at all times at the head of
 his marshalled force, watching our indolence,
 and employing greater diligence for our de-
 struction, than we use for our salvation :
 and, being invisible, and attacking us sud-
 denly, which occasions innumerable evils,
 he thus renders the war, in which we must
 engage with him, much more harassing, than
 that with men, who are not constantly on the
 alert.

Did you then (I may now ask you) wish
 me to lead the army of Christ ? It would be
 to take a command for the devil : for, when
 he, who ought to marshal and array the rest,
 is the most inexperienced and helpless of all,
 and must betray those, who were committed
 to him, through his inexperience, he com-
 mands for the devil rather than for Christ.

‘ But why do you groan? Why do you weep?
 ‘ For my present situation is one, which
 ‘ demands not your tears, but rather delight
 ‘ and joy.’

‘ But not mine ’—said he. ‘ It calls for un-
 ‘ bounded lamentation : for I now at length
 ‘ begin to discern, into what evils you have
 ‘ brought me. I came to you, to learn, what
 ‘ apology I could make for you to those, who
 ‘ are finding fault with you. But you send
 ‘ me away with one distress instead of another :
 ‘ for now I cease to concern myself about the
 ‘ answer I am to make to them on your behalf,
 ‘ and am only distressed about that, which I
 ‘ must render to God on my own, and for my
 ‘ own crimes : and now I beg and beseech you,
 ‘ if you have any regard for me, if there be any
 ‘ consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love,
 ‘ if any bowels and mercies, (for you know,
 ‘ that it is chiefly by your means, that I am
 ‘ brought into this danger), stretch out your
 ‘ hand to me, and hold me up by your salutary
 ‘ advice and assistance! Do not allow yourself
 ‘ to be absent from me for a moment! But let

‘ us now spend our time together more strictly
‘ than ever ! ’

To this I replied, smiling—‘ And what assistance can I render ? What can I do in an
‘ affair of this difficulty ? Yet, since it is
‘ your wish, my friend, be at ease ! For,
‘ whenever you shall have leisure from your
‘ professional labours, I will both seek your
‘ company, and comfort you, and will omit
‘ nothing, that is in my power.’

At these words he arose with more tears ;
and I, having embraced and kissed him,
brought him on his way, exhorting him to
submit with cheerfulness to what had happened—‘ For I trust’—said I, ‘ in Christ, who
‘ has called you, and appointed you over his
‘ sheep, that you will acquire such influence
‘ by this ministry as to carry me also with
‘ you at that day out of my present peril-
‘ ous condition into your own everlasting
‘ habitation.’

THE END.

NOTES.

That happy state, the life of monks.—(p. 2.)

How early the disposition to invent a better way than that, taught in the bible, entered into the church of Christ! Monasticism, a state, unknown to the apostles, was soon regarded, as the true philosophy; and a life of contemplation and indolent devotion was thought to advance the soul to a higher degree of perfection than is attainable in the discharge of those ordinary duties, which belong to common christians.

In the early ages indeed, when heathenism reigned predominant, and even afterwards, when it had not yet been superseded by christianity, such institutions might be a most valuable refuge for young students, or converts, from surrounding contamination: and we need not wonder, that they were so highly commended, when their advantages were palpable, and the abominations, which in course of time crept into them, had not yet become matters of experience.

Still Chrysostom says enough to shew, that their beneficial tendency, even as they were then conducted, was on the whole questionable. They indeed were not, like some monasteries in a later age, schools for laziness and luxury. The inmates provided every thing for themselves, and were thus trained in habits of industry: nor were they fettered by vows, and prevented from returning into society. Yet it was found, that

their entire seclusion from the world, if continued for any length of time, was no suitable preparation for the ministry ; and the same mistake was made in this method of training young christians for the active duties of life, which was experienced by the ancient Greeks, when they attempted to improve the military virtues of the people by the institution of the public games. The special discipline, which was required for a racer or combatant in those gymnastic exercises, was not favorable to the acquisition of the habits, which were required in the regular soldier, when called into actual service : and so Chrysostom himself remarks concerning monastic institutions, that ‘ there is no less favorable preparation for the government of a church than that exemption from business and care ; for any one, who has been long habituated to such retirement, and has passed his life in tranquillity, is hindered by his own inactivity, and the very want of practice cripples his ability in no slight degree : whence it arises, that few become conspicuous, who are brought out of that school to this scene of labour ; nor is this surprising, for,’ (says he) ‘ when the actual contest and the preparatory institution are not regulated with the same view, the practised combatant has no advantage over the uninstructed.’—(pp. 192, 193)

Some persons even in the assembly helped to deceive him.—(p. 10)

What a departure does this whole scene exhibit from the simplicity of the gospel ! Chrysostom deceives his friend ; others concur in deceiving him by a direct and wilful falshood ; Basil is thus inveigled into the assembly on a different pretext from the real design, entertained in regard to him ; and the holy office of the priesthood instead of being deliberately conferred, and meekly accepted, is made a matter of artifice

and delusion, being regarded with superstitious terror, and declined, as a burden, by those, who ought, when rightly called to it, to take the oversight of Christ's flock not by constraint, but willingly.

Cease to upbraid me with deceiving you, and shew, that I have done it with a malicious design!—(p. 20.)

The practice of pious frauds is of very early origin in the church. But here it is stoutly defended; and even scripture is quoted in support of it. Some of the arguments however, derived from other sources, are only rhetorical flourishes. The use of stratagem in war, when all the relations, which bind man to man, are broken up, or the artifices, employed by physicians, to save the life of an obstinate and impracticable patient, may be right, or wrong, but can hardly be alleged seriously, to justify christians in acting deceitfully to one another: and as to the scriptural examples, we are not concerned to vindicate Jacob in his fraud upon Isaac, for which it is untruly alleged, that God has commended him; and, if Michal's deceit may be palliated by the danger of her husband, no such excuse can be pleaded for Chrysostom in the studied imposition, which he practised upon his friend.

It was with this view, that he, who wrote to the Galatians—‘ If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing,’ yet submitted to circumcise Timothy.—(p. 25.)

The parallel here fails in the most essential particulars: for St. Paul did a lawful act for a lawful purpose, whereas Chrysostom committed an unlawful act, namely a falsehood,

for an unlawful purpose, namely to deceive. It was not unlawful for a son of a Jewess to be circumcised; nor were the Jews deceived by it, though their prejudices were conciliated. But, when Titus, a Gentile, was converted, saint Paul's language is very different. Conciliation then has no place.

Let those be brought forward, who are vastly superior to the rest of mankind!—(p. 31.)

However fit it may be to magnify the ministerial office, it is unreasonable and mischievous to require superhuman qualifications from ministers, as if they must needs be as superior to the rest of mankind, as their employment surpasses in dignity every other human employment. Saint Paul takes another course, when he asks—‘Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers, by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?’ In fact all the essential qualities, if I may so describe them, which are necessary in the ministers of the gospel, are required in every true Christian, though not in the same degree. The love of Christ and of his gospel, the hatred of sin, and desire to be delivered from it, the faith and purity, which are needful for the work of the ministry, are also needful for the salvation of a sinner. But a minister should not be a novice. He should be able to speak to others from the results of his own experience, yet still, as a sinner, speaking to sinners, as a partaker of grace, to those, who are either partakers, or invited to become partakers of the same grace: and to draw a picture of qualifications for the ministry, which are not warranted by scripture, or justified by experience, can answer no other purpose, but to deter faithful men from entering the ministry, and elate ungodly ministers with a false notion of their importance. How different is this from the sober statement of

ministerial qualifications, made by the apostle! ‘If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient, not a brawler, not covetous, one, that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity, not a novice, lest, being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil.’

Of all men Christians are the least defensible, if they attempt to correct the errors of the wicked by force.—(p. 35.)

The argument against the use of force in religion is admirable, though here only brought in incidentally.

Only conceiving it possible, that human nature should look with contempt upon that dignity.—(p. 56.)

Yet the office is despised by many persons, and most by those, who intrude into it without a call.

You see the Lord, sacrificed, and laid upon the altar, and the priest, standing, and praying over the sacrifice, and all the people empurpled with his most precious blood.—(p. 60.)

This image of the Lord, sacrificed upon the altar, and the people empurpled with his blood, is a highly figurative description of a body of communicants, impressed through faith with a deep sense of the value of his atonement. But, like other figures, which are occasionally introduced, to adorn

and elevate this christian festival, it favors the notion of a sacrificing priest, which came at a later age to be distinctly taught, though it is foreign to the whole design of the gospel. At the same time the question—‘Are you not transported ‘into the heavens?’—shews, that in Chrysostom’s view this was an act of faith, not of carnal transubstantiation.

What indeed has he really given them, but the whole authority of Heaven?—p. 63.

This is another oratorical description, calculated to mislead by representing earthly ministers, as wielding absolutely the authority of heaven, and responsible to none, but God.

If he, who does not eat the flesh of the Lord, and drink his blood, is rejected from eternal life, and if all these blessings are dispensed only by the holy hands of the priest.—(p. 64.)

The words of our Saviour, relating to a spiritual participation in his body and blood, are here restrained to the sacramental act, of which the priest is the dispenser.

These are they, who superintend our spiritual birth, and are entrusted with the regeneration of baptism.—(p. 64.)

The comparison of priests to fathers, not because they have been instrumental in turning the heart to God, but because they administer the external rite of baptism, is fundamentally erroneous. Saint Paul says—‘Christ sent me, ‘not to baptize, but to preach the gospel,’—: and by this instrument, by the foolishness of preaching ‘I,’—says he to his converts—‘have begotten you all through the gospel,’—; in

which words he claims to be exclusively the father of all the Corinthian disciples, although he had baptized none of them, but Crispus and Gaius. At the same time it should be observed, that Chrysostom does not here confine the grace of forgiveness to the act of baptism, but extends it to other parts of pastoral duty.

We may justly fear them more than kings.—
(p. 65.)

This claim of more than kingly honour ascribes a personal distinction to the priest, very different from the simple direction of the apostle. ‘Obey them, that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves (for they watch for your souls, as they, that must give account), that they may do it with joy, and not with grief!’

*He ought to purify his soul from all ambitious fondness for the task he has undertaken.—*p. 75.

Here we come to a very important truth: for the respect, properly paid to the ministerial office, is a snare to him, who holds it, and a temptation to others to aspire to it without those necessary qualifications, the very first of which is humility.

You may see the council of elders unable to come to an agreement either among themselves, or with the bishop, who presides over them, concerning the person, who ought to be preferred.—
(p. 91.)

It is plain from this passage, that ordinations in those days were managed by a body of presbyters, who selected the persons to be recommended to the bishop, though he himself had authority to refuse, or admit their application.

If there were a candidate, who had spent all his life in the lowest rank of the ministry, and had come to extreme old age, I would not through reverence for his years promote even such an one inconsiderately to the highest order.—p. 93. avwTEPW

The practice of advancing deacons to the priesthood, as a matter of course, after a short probation, had not begun in the days of Chrysostom.

He must look to one thing only, the edification of the church, doing nothing from resentment or partiality.—p. 100.

It cannot but be admitted, if there be no exaggeration in the foregoing statements, as well as in others in the fifth book, that the church in Chrysostom's days was overrun with abuses of the most flagrant description ; in the midst of which it is refreshing to observe the high tone of christian principle, which he maintains in laying down the duties of a faithful pastor, and the perpetual reference, which he makes, to scripture, as the sole and sufficient authority for all his maxims.

She professes to exhibit upon earth the conduct of angels, and in this flesh to follow the steps of those unembodied spirits.—(p. 108.)

Where is the scriptural authority for exalting young females, who have devoted themselves to a single life, above all other christians, nay, above the rank of angels, who (it is intimated) cannot surpass their virtue, though they are exempted from their temptations ? If the innocence of young women is often exposed to peril in the world through the flattery of their

admirers, their humility has sometimes been equally endangered in the church through the proneness of grave divines to elevate them above measure, and thus to puff them up with self-conceit by leading them to form extravagant opinions of their own sanctity.

The virgin ought to be confined within walls, and not to go out of the house.—p. 112.

How strong an evidence is this to the fact, that the best security for female innocence is the parental roof, and that the disruption of family ties and family affections, by which the seclusion of a nunnery is purchased, is the abandonment of a heaven-appointed barrier for one of human invention !

The church of Christ is his body.—p. 136.

It will be observed, that notwithstanding the figurative description, in which Chrysostom indulges, of the solemnities of the holy eucharist, the body of Christ according to him is not the sacramental bread, but the church.

Whatever offences may have been committed, one only method and course of treatment is to be adopted, instruction through the word.—p 137.

How very distinctly Chrysostom here, and further on in the hundred-and-forty-fifth page propounds, as the one only medicine for the diseases of the soul, not the sacraments, but instruction through the word !

No trace of that faculty remains to us.—p. 139.

The testimony, borne by Chrysostom in this passage to the total absence of all miraculous powers in his day, cannot pass unnoticed.

Who beseeches God to be propitious to the sins of all men, not only of the living, but also of the departed.—(p. 183.)

It is impossible to deny, that prayers for the dead formed a part of those uncommanded and supererogatory services, from which it was reserved for the reformation in the sixteenth century to purify the church of Christ.

There are angels, who stand near the priest.—p. 184.

The superstitious credulity of Chrysostom in this particular on matters not revealed, and the honour, paid in these fables to the outward symbols, appointed by our lord to be signs of his most blessed body and blood, illustrate the declension, which the church had even then undergone from the simplicity of the gospel.

The chief of these is the necessity of holding intercourse with females.—p. 195.

The frequent allusion to this source of danger in the life of a priest demonstrates still further the inconvenience and mischief, arising from forming men and women into separate communities instead of blending them in families, where natural affection is under the blessing of God, and by his providential appointment, the best guardian of purity. The necessity, entailed upon the priest, of visiting establishments of females, associated for religious purposes, but separated from their parents and brothers, was a very different thing, and far more ensnaring than the occasional intercourse, which naturally arises in mixed society, while the merit, attached in those days to a single life, by prohibiting to a great extent the formation of an honorable attachment rendered the at-

tractions of female society peculiarly perilous to a minister, who exposed himself to them from one sense of duty, and yet felt it necessary to be altogether upon his guard against them from another.

If I remain here in quiet, these enemies will be subdued.—(p. 206.)

There is an apparent inconsistency between the expectation, which Chrysostom here avows, of subduing his constitutional failings by solitude, and thus fitting himself for being eventually admitted to the more active duties of the priesthood, and the reasoning, pursued about twenty pages before, which led him to observe, that few succeed well in the ministry, who are brought to it out of the monastic school.

When he, who ought to marshal and array the rest, is the most inexperienced and helpless of all, he commands for the devil rather than for Christ.—(p. 216.)

The ostentatious enumeration of all the particulars of warfare, both temporal and spiritual, which precedes this statement, must surprise a modern reader. But the sentiment, inculcated in it, that the warfare, in which we are engaged, is infinitely more important as well as more formidable than any earthly contention, is worthy of all observation; and the danger, arising to the church of Christ from the intrusion into the ministry of ignorant, inexperienced, and incompetent persons, is forcibly stated in the sentence, quoted above. But the comparison of a priest to a general is liable to mislead: for although all christians ought to act with as much co-operation, or at least with the same unanimity, as the soldiers of an army, and although in both cases union is strength, the

duty of a minister is not, like that of a general, to move the united body, but to watch over the individual members of his band, to fit and animate each of them for the particular office, assigned to him, and in this way to please him, who hath called him to be a soldier. His duty is by testimony and example, or, as St. Paul states it, by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the holy ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, to win sinners to repentance, encourage believers in the faith, and in short to hold fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort, and to convince the gainsayers. But to compare this minute watchfulness over the individuals of a flock to the work of a general, whose concern is with masses of men, and who disregards individuals, except as they are constituent members of the army under his command, is to give an incorrect view of his condition and duty, and tends unduly to exalt him instead of securing to him the honour, which is his just due. When however we thus take a just view of the patient attention, which is required from a faithful minister, to the circumstances and characters of those, over whom he presides, we may well ask—‘Who is sufficient for these things?’—and can only comfort ourselves with the thought, that, while we attempt this task not in our own strength, but in that of him, who has called us, the Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.

In the few foregoing notes I have endeavored to bring the leading sentiments of this memorable treatise to the tribunal of holy scripture. The opinions of ancient fathers

deserve all respect, and should be examined with tenderness. But it would be treason to the majesty of scripture to exempt any christian writer of any age from subjection to its supreme authority, or not to scrutinize with all freedom every sentiment, which seems at variance with its instructions. In respect to the fathers in particular, they, like other christians, received their rule of action from the Bible. But from the necessary want of experience in the early ages of the gospel they carried some principles to an extravagant length, from which nothing, but experience of the result, could reclaim either them, or us. But it is in this, as in natural truths. *Opinionum commenta delet dies ; naturæ, or, as we may say scripturæ judicia confirmat.*

When christians perceived the dangerous lengths, to which weak believers carried, and the erroneous notions, which they deduced from incautious or enraptured expressions of some venerated fathers, they learned to be more careful in their language, to measure their phrases by a more studious adherence to the original text, and to discern distinctions, which the errors of others had brought into prominence. Thus the experience of succeeding ages has the same effect on the church at large, which advancing years have upon an individual. If it abate in any degree the fervour, it improves the precision of its language : and hence it may be expected, and has in fact been found to come to pass, that the doctrinal statements of later ages have been more studiously scriptural and correct than those of a preceding age ; and the reasonings of successive generations upon the same texts, like the experiments and calculations of natural philosophers upon the same phænomena, increase knowledge, and produce a more exact theology. Hence the doctrinal articles of the reformation, as exhibited in the confessions of the reformed churches, surpass in scriptural accuracy any thing, that can be collected from the writings of those, who are called the fathers : and

perhaps, as it has been judiciously and acutely observed, it would be more strictly in analogy to call the early writers the younger confessors of our Lord, and the reformers the fathers of the church, as being the more mature and ripened professors of christian truth, who had profited by the errors of their predecessors, and by bringing all their opinions to the test of scripture had been enabled to produce a more accurate, if in any respect a colder theology.

Thus the modern theory of development appears in one view of it to be true: for experience develops more and more the mind of the spirit, as revealed in the scriptures. No new revelation indeed has been made, nor any new source of revelation opened. But continued researches, added to the progressive fulfilment of prophecy, and the result of experiments, made upon human nature by successive attempts to give effect to the directions of scripture, have disclosed and explained what was obscure, and given us a more distinct apprehension than our ancestors could obtain of many particulars in the scheme of revelation.

For example, the monasticism of the early ages came, recommended by the necessity of providing an asylum for youth from the deteriorating influence of heathen society; and the first christians went into it without suspicion. But, when it was found, that the spirit of the world could penetrate even the seclusion of a monastery, that retirement from the duties of life was not tantamount to a renunciation of its vices, and that the remedy itself introduced new evils, some of them even greater than those, which it cured, the opinions of reflecting christians became gradually modified, and were reduced to a more scriptural standard by reasoning upon the experience of a preceding age.

So it was also with the charitable institutions of the early church. That for the relief of widows for instance, though it began in the days of the apostles, when the nume-

rous martyrdoms of the heads of families bequeathed them to the charity of survivors, and was continued at an age, when it was less needed, with so much liberality as to give occasion to various abuses, came afterwards to be laid aside, partly perhaps from the declining piety of later ages, but partly also, because experience has taught us, how asylums or hospitals for this purpose may be so contrived as to bestow the requisite relief without exciting the cabals and heart-burnings and mischievous rivalry, of which Chrysostom complains.

But after all, the grand subject of the treatise, the awe and reverence, with which the functions of the christian priesthood ought to be regarded by those, who look forward to be engaged in it, the singleness of aim, and freedom from interested motives of worldly advancement, which ought to characterize persons, who profess to be inwardly moved by the holy Ghost to take upon them this office and administration, and the fearful responsibility, incurred by those, who intrude into it without that call, and who consequently may be expected to injure the flock, which they profess to feed, these considerations are placed before the reader with a force and truth, calculated to impress him with right feelings and holy sentiments on a matter of such deep moment to the church : and, if the publication of this translation shall be instrumental in leading any inconsiderate candidates for the ministry to pause, and reflect seriously on what they are doing, it will not be without its use. I am persuaded indeed, that the purity of the motives, which ought to actuate a christian in seeking admission to the ministry of the blessed gospel, cannot be inculcated too strictly. The necessary qualifications for the priesthood may be rated too highly, but not the purity of the motives, which should influence those, who come to it ; and I would venture to lay it down, as one proper test of that purity, that no one ought to enter the ministry of an established church,

who would not equally desire to enter it, if it were not established. The motto of christian ministers should be—‘ The love of Christ constraineth us ’ : and, while they have always, upon the authority of our lord and his apostles, a just claim for their personal maintenance, whether the provision for that purpose be secured to them by law, or otherwise, no considerations of worldly interest ought to mix themselves with the objects, which a christian has in view, when seeking to engage himself in that holy office. Clergymen are subject to like passions with their hearers ; they have this treasure in earthen vessels ; and every allowance ought to be made for their infirmities and mistakes. But their motives ought to be pure ; and no inducements of a worldly nature should prevail with persons, who are insensible to higher considerations, to undertake the weighty charge of an overseer in the house of God. When the nature of that charge is considered, when it is remembered, that a clergyman is not only to preach the word, but to be instant in season, out of season, to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine, and to watch for souls, as one, who must give account, it is clear, that these are duties, which can only be fully undertaken, or faithfully executed by persons, who take the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, neither, as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.




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